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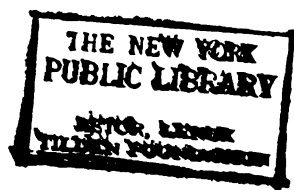






An Express of '76







"They were seen together a night or two in the early days of
winter." (The photograph is a negative.)



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AN EXPRESS OF '76

A Chronicle of the Town of York
in the War for Independence

By
LINDLEY MURRAY HUBBARD

Illustrated by I. B. Beales

M. M. HUBBARD,
NEW YORK.

M 386507

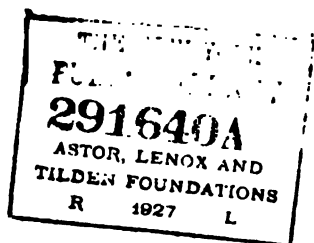
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TO MY ESTEEMED FELLOW-TOWNSMAN
EDWARD M. SHEPARD





MASSACHUSETTS,
NEW YORK.
INTRODUCTION.

THE JOURNAL OF GENERAL HUBBARD.

Once around the town clock of the new City Hall—which in 1825 had lately been finished—brings every day, observes General Hubbard in his journal, some new and remarkable happening; but strange things did happen fifty years ago, some of them being only just found out. 'Maybe,' he adds, 'the patriots of the Revolution did not know so much that was new and smart as people nowadays do, but they did know things which they do not always get the credit for, as there be those still living can testify. They set out a pretty big stent for themselves and they stuck to it to the finish, which is not always the fashion in these times.'

'You doubt at times,' General Hubbard continues a little farther on, 'if you ever really did know the bronze and marble figures that stand so stiff and haughty-like in public places—but the haughtiness is just put on for show, after all. Now and then you get a side glance under it, such as a play actor throws to a friend in the audience, that brings up familiar scenes, or some incident in which you took part.'

Last summer, when the old Hubbard residence was torn down, the early parts of General Hubbard's journal, which had been missing, were found between the

weather-boarding and the plaster. A workman who gathered up the sheets laid them aside on a pile of rubbish until he had called my attention. The old house was built by the late General Hubbard fully a hundred years ago. He spent the last twenty-five years of his life there. My father passed his boyhood in the house, and had a distinct recollection of his grandfather, who served, it will be remembered, with great credit in the Revolutionary War. The General often told the children stories of his experiences, and traditions of some of the incidents here related are still preserved in our family.

The General wrote with great care almost daily in his journal, always having a clean sheet of blotting paper between the pages. After his death the manuscript, which had become voluminous, was packed in a cowhide trunk and stored for many years in the attic of the old house. In my father's time the children had the run of the attic, and often, he said, rummaged the trunk and scattered its contents, which will account for the missing sheets having been thrown down the open space of the garret weather-boarding.

A few sheets are still missing, and all are stained, faded and nibbled by mice, but otherwise in fair preservation. This narrative which follows the General's own account, tells of his first arrival in the town of New York on an important official mission, in that summer of '76, and of his joining the army several months before the battle of Long Island, and the evacuation of the city. It is a personal experience of interest at this critical period. The estimate of his asso-



INTRODUCTION.

III

ciates and contemporaries is that set down by the General himself in his later years.

What is related from General Hubbard's direct participation or recollection is assumed to be substantially accurate. Lady Claremont's identity, which history has hitherto concealed, sets forth more clearly the self-restraint of Washington, his single, patriotic purpose, and the influences brought to bear at this time. I had thought of turning over these documents to the Daughters of the Revolution, and may yet do so. Through the kindness of several friends who are authorities on Revolutionary history, I have obtained other interesting information of Lady Claremont's curious and remarkable participation in the Hickey arrest and trial, and in one or two subsequent incidents.

LINDLEY MURRAY HUBBARD.

New York, April 15, 1905.





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AN EXPRESS OF '76.

CHAPTER I.

'AN EXPRESS FROM BOSTON.

One pleasant, early summer's afternoon about four of the clock, Robert Murray's great "leather convenience" returning from town, rumbled around the flanks of Murray Hill in sight of The Inclenberg, on the Boston Post Road, as a dust-cloud with heavy horse tramp came down from the north.

A soft air, the balmiest of June—fleecy cloud packs in the blue overhead, red clover in the field, and foliage on the hillside a moist green. No thunder-bolts fall from clear skies, we learn with after years. But who can foretell the thunder cloud, the withering flash, the hot blast, the smoke and crash that may come?

In 1776 the Quaker merchant's chariot and four, and its fat negro coachman and footman, were still among the luxuries and a source of admiration in the town of New York. Its present burden, a quartette of youth and beauty in summer array, of cool chintzes, and expansive muskmelon, Leghorn bonnets—not to mention the rich and healthful complexions, or flashing smiles and coquettish glances that are wont to shoot

from a battery of gay and youthful eyes—was no less a source of admiration to the eligible Continental officers quartered in town.

The dust-cloud had rolled down Breakneck Hill from Kings Bridge—the only point of connection between York Island and the main. Puffing and wheezing it had climbed the rocky and wooded cleft of McGowans Pass, and bowled along before the Black Horse Tavern, whose idlers laid wager that none but an express would raise so mighty a dust. A puff of wind revealed a passing glimpse of the rider bent over a heavy plow-horse, but giving little heed to tavern idlers; or to the Dutch farmers among the fields who shook their heads in solemn deprecation of his wanton disregard of good horseflesh.

Fired with a patriotic mission and approaching the goal after forty hours hard riding over rough and dusty roads from Boston, all beyond was a closed volume to the Express, but of great promise—the present chapter, to leave a lasting impress upon his career.

His horse, laboring around the turn in the Post Road, encountered the chariot and four. The dust-cloud was an apparition in broad day to the startled coachman. The fat horses plunged and drew back in fright. Then the cloud enveloped the chariot. The coachmen tumbled from their seats. All for the instant was in confusion, a chorus of thrilling cries rising as the horses broke away with reins trailing.

The Express, springing to the ground, caught the lines and was dragged for a space in imminent peril of coach wheels and the horses' heels, until the coach-



men, gathering their wits, came to aid him. Then the Express, turning to his own horse, paused to make inquiry of the occupants of the coach, who were regarding him with the interest that a prompt and gallant action never fails to inspire in women.

A tall youth, looking overgrown and rustic, with the dusty homespuns clinging about his ankles, but a boyish frankness that gleamed from the bright, gray eyes, gave the face, which was alert and impetuous, rather than subtle, an expression of shrewd and ready wit.

"I guess York taown can't be far off?" he observed with distinct New England inflection, pausing abruptly when conscious of the eyes of four young and beautiful women centered upon him.

Mistress Polly Murray, in sober Quaker garb with white kerchief at her throat, was as mild, pretty, and quiet a brown-eyed maid as one would spy in a day's travel—the Murray estate would have endowed amply with all the graces, a really plain maiden, which she was not. Mistresses Elizabeth Schuyler and Gitty Wynkoop, whose families ranked high in the province of New York, made up in liveliness and demonstration what their young hostess lacked—and all were in a degree under the espionage of that young and strangely fascinating Lady Claremont—this day returned from Boston—who, though barely exceeding them in years, was acknowledged, with her reputed experience on two continents, one of the most charming of women, in the social circles of town.

The Express was by no means lacking in self-con-

fidence, but so unexpected a vision of fair faces was enough to check the assurance even of a young man; and a delicate, almost imperceptible perfume which reached him, was like that which comes from delightful gardens in Arabian tales—blooming in the desert unexpectedly. He might not have paused longer, but the graceful figure of Lady Claremont leaning over the side of the carriage, bent upon him a lustrous pair of dark eyes, whose depths were unfathomable, and with melody of accent that the Express from Boston had never before realized in human voice, she answered his inquiry:

"You are barely three miles from town—we all thank you for stopping the horses so splendidly—are you sure you are not hurt?"

"No, marm," and displaying a double row of white teeth, "the ground's soft. I only plowed a furrer."

"But you have soiled your clothes!" cries Mistress Wynkoop, her bright eyes a-sparkle with mirth and mischief.

"It don't caount," returned the Express, glancing unconcerned over his bedusted linsey woolseys. "They're not Sunday-go-to-meetin's—I'm sorry to give you ladies a scare."

"'Twas not your fault, indeed," replied the Lady Claremont and her friends. "Surely there is no saying what might have befallen had you not caught the reins."

"I doubt not," added Miss Polly Murray, with so much feeling in her voice and her great brown eyes,



that the young man's face flushed through its coat of tan and dust,—“I doubt not that thou must be bruised, and my father will chide me if thou dost not come to his home, which is near, and permit him to care for thee.”

“Thank you, ladies,” the Express replied, with a touch of grace unexpected in a country lad. “But I have an express for General Washington, in haste.”

“Have you then ridden so far?” inquired the Lady Claremont.

“I left Bos-tin yesterday morning.”

“Since yesterday! I have but just arrived, and was three days, though we did make good speed.”

The Express regarded her intently.

“Poor boy!” she continued, a deeper concern in her rich contralto tones. “You must be exhausted.”

“Oh, I'm not tired!” He resented quickly the imputation of weariness, and moved to depart, but bent forward as he did so, slipping from an inner pocket a letter which he appeared to pick up from the road, while a glimpse from a corner of his eyes satisfied him that none had observed his sleight-of-hand, unless it were the Lady Claremont herself. He shook the dust from the note, extending it to her.

“I guess you must have dropped this.”

Her dark eyes deepened and widened as they rested on the Express. She continued with a glance at the inscription, and a look that seemed to diffuse itself into his own thoughts:

“It should be an important message that you ride with such post haste?”

"Yes, I guess it is," replied the Express.

"Will you not tell the name of one who hath given us such timely aid?"

"I'm Jonathan Hubbard of Hubbardton."

The Express, notwithstanding his self-confidence, blushed for the second time that afternoon.

Then he raised a hand to his cap and turned to the horse, which was peacefully cropping the grass by the roadside. The young women waved a cordial response, watched him regain the animal, and followed the dust-cloud as it rolled from sight at the turn of the Post Road on the way to town.

The Express, Jonathan Hubbard, confident of himself and sure of the high significance of his mission, did but dimly conjecture how friendly and happy the current that carried him forward into the town of York, or its increasing import with the years. Its voice a low murmur like the rich tones of my Lady Claremont—far and vague as her dark eyes, like a deep pool in the shady umbrage of a forest; its memory to linger long shaping his life and future—too vague and complicate for present conjecture; and he shook it behind him, his goddess of mishap or fortune, with a toss of the head which was his habit.

A rare day it was when expresses did not speed along the Boston Post Road. Turbulent times had befallen the colonies, and the whole country being in arms was pouring recruits into New York from Massachusetts to the Carolinas. The rebellious subjects of King George III. were presently to announce a Declaration of Independence, that all men were created



AN EXPRESS FROM BOSTON.

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equal, and entitled to his pleasure in the pursuit of liberty and happiness; and the colonies were sovereign and independent States, as free to express and carry out their wills, as the oldest established nations on earth.

Loyal subjects of the crown made light of these new and unorthodox doctrines, predicting discreetly, but with confidence, that John Bull, once aroused in his might, would quickly put an end to such heresies. Sir William and his brother, Admiral Howe, were gathering in the harbor of New York the greatest force afloat since the Armada, while the colonial troops under Washington, brim full of confidence and patriotism, hurried forward their preparations with the sanction of the Continental Congress, to meet the expected attack on the city.



CHAPTER II.

A HUBBARD OF HUBBARDTON.

Jonathan Hubbard was no raw country lad. His forebears were the Hubbards of Hubbardton, an ancient lineage set down in New England family Bibles and nursery lore. It was one of those rare intuitions akin to fatality, by which he had recognized the Lady Claremont as the owner of a note that had by chance come into his possession. He had the rugged colonial training, and had been enrolled a year at Harvard College, when the death of the senior Hubbard had called him home to assist a widowed mother in her affairs, and in editing and printing the irregular issues of the Gazette which his father had established.

At Harvard, the years preceding the Revolution were not the best suited for close study, but Hubbard and many of his fellow students found in the political problems which were troubling the Boston Commonwealth plenty of occupation. Many had entered readily on the organization of Sons of Liberty and Minute Men, and into the concoction of eloquent appeals, and stirring harangues on individual rights, and taxation without representation—natural outlets for youthful enthusiasm.

After Hubbard's return home came the affair of



Lexington, and later Bunker Hill. He had watched, chafing with anxiety, lest the struggle for liberty should pass by with no opportunity for him to take part. But the death of his remaining parent left him to his own course, and having paid her the last tributes of affection, he lost no time in adjusting his affairs and hastening to Boston to enlist with the colonies.

The seat of war had been transferred after the capture of Boston to New York. At this juncture the Boston Committee of Public Safety had secured information of great importance to the American cause. With no better means at hand it was well satisfied, after consultation, to confide to so zealous a young patriot the delivery of its message. He volunteered to undertake this at the risk of life and limb, and in addition to other recommendations, at his own personal expense—this last consideration in the uncertain financial state of the country, not to be ignored by a prudent and patriotic Committee.

In place of a money contribution the Committee agreed to provide the horse on which the Express began his journey. This valuable property he was to treat with great forbearance, and to leave with explicit instructions for its return, on completing the first stage of the journey. He was further empowered in behalf of the cause of American independence, to levy freely on all towns along his route for the supply of his own needs and provender for his horse, in the name of the Boston Committee of Safety, and the Continental Congress.

Thus equipped and accredited the Express started forth with the Committee's "Godspeed" and a prayer, of a Sunday morning, from the old Lamb Tavern, under the sign that had been shattered in the recent siege of the town.

The sun had not yet risen, but the sky was aglow in the east when he crossed the "neck" to Roxbury, traversing the recent camp of the American army while besieging Boston. Boston town still slumbered. Its spires and domes showed in distinct profile on the glowing east with the waters of the Bay beyond.

In the cool morning fragrance the pulses of the Express throbbed with youthful fervor. He congratulated himself that his mission was no less important than that of Paul Revere the year before. The destiny of the country rested with him. Had a regiment of British soldiers appeared on the road he would have beheld them undaunted; but no redcoats greeted him as he clattered by, other than the robins, whose matin notes mingled with those of the bob-o-link and meadow lark, swelled in louder chorus from every brookside.

It soon appeared that the Committee had made no mistake in its selection. Filled with the supreme confidence and the unconscious vanity of youth, the important documents secure beneath his coat, Hubbard carried out his instructions to the letter. Fifty miles had rolled under him before noon, when he swept boldly into Providence town. The church bells were ringing the morning service, but displaying his credentials, he demanded instant and fresh equipment



with an assurance and vague import that procured the outfit without delay.

The relay carried the Express into the boundaries of Connecticut, where a mishap to his horse caused a slight change in his plans. The wary and thrifty Connecticut citizens of the first town he reached did not so readily respond to the proposal to exchange a sound horse for a maimed animal, and they yielded only with reluctance after a vigorous exhortation.

This was still more marked at the next relay. The local Committee of Public Safety read the credentials with stolid faces, unmoved even by an appeal to the sacred cause of liberty and the name of the Continental Congress. Then the Express, roused by such indifference to the public weal, made indignant protest. He called upon its patriotism with the flaming eloquence of his college days, and with such effect that his audience, which was composed of half the community, was lifted to fever heat. Public sentiment obliged the Committee and the Selectmen to provide for his needs.

The steed being produced, the Express declined all invitation to linger, but sprung at once upon its back, and lost no time in placing the town far behind ere the authorities should have leisure to cool, or to reconsider their action.

Riding by day and night with the instinct of a true courier, his frontier training guided him in short cuts across country, and enabled him to cling to the saddle catching forty winks between times when the roads permitted. He had confidently anticipated arriving at his destination before noon of the second day, when

his course was checked by a more serious embarrassment.

The fourth horse went lame the second morning, on the last stage, just before reaching the East Chester Tavern, within twenty-five miles of his journey's end. The tavern keeper, a circumspect and profuse patriot, on reading Hubbard's credentials, agreed to equip him in an hour's time with his own horse, which was then absent in the neighborhood. Thus assured the Express, after a hasty refreshment, stretched himself to take advantage of the interval with a brief rest, having first exacted a promise that he should be called in an hour's time, whether or not the horse had arrived.

His thoughts, occupied with his mission, permitted little more than a doze, and this was pervaded by the hum of voices in an adjoining room. One of these he became conscious, presently, was a woman's. She was protesting with much feeling at some project in which her companion, a man, was engaged, and his arguments appeared only to emphasize her disapproval.

The nature of this project did not appear to the Express in his half-awakened state, further than her insistence that it was unwise, as well as unfair—that it was most likely to fail, and would prove hurtful to all better methods and influence. Just as he began to awaken to an interest in the discussion, the door, which had been ajar, was closed, and only a low murmur then reached him. The man soon left the room, and the woman followed directly.

As Hubbard by this time fully awake, took the same



course, a white object on the floor of the hallway caught his eye. It proved to be a note from which issued a fragrant odor, and thinking that the woman might have dropped it on leaving the room, he hastened to overtake her. At the foot of the stairway, instead, he ran violently into a man who was entering from without.

"I didn't hear ye coming," the Express grinned, apologetically and in good fellowship, while he rubbed his bruised shins.

"Ye might if y'd hung one of those long shanks outside," returned the other, catching his breath, gruffly. Then with sudden suspicion he seized Hubbard by the collar roughly: "What are you doing here?"

"I might ask the same of you," the Express resented, pulling away.

The man was of tall and vigorous build, his face partly covered with a short, curly growth of dark beard. He was plainly dressed and he had an air of authority.

"The young man is an express, jest come from Bosting," explained the tavern keeper, pushing up and smiling profusely.

"Oh, he's an express, is he?" said the stranger, still surveying Hubbard. "What's your express?"

"To carry my long shanks to York," said Hubbard.

The stranger handed the landlord his reckoning without further words, and turning to the porch leaped upon the horse that was waiting. He paid no attention to the Express, who called to him, but spurred forward to join the woman at a little distance beyond on the

road. They were evidently the same persons who had occupied the room adjoining Hubbard's, but the note was now thrust into his pocket, where for the moment it was forgotten in a turn of affairs that affected him more directly.

The tavern keeper was engaged in a heated parley with his stable boy. After repeated inquiries from Hubbard, each of which appeared to raise his anger to a higher pitch, he cooled sufficiently to reply that the horse he had promised to the Express had been returned, but the boy had stupidly permitted it to be taken by the lady and gentleman who had just left the house.

"They must be overtaken, then!" cried Hubbard in alarm.

But that was clearly impossible, the host explained, which was the cause of his anger. They were already a mile away, and there were no means to overtake them other than Hubbard's lame beast and the stage horses by which the lady had arrived from Boston the night before. He added assuringly, that if the Express could wait a little the horses would be back in an hour or less. They were only going over to the "Neck," whence the gentleman had come that same morning to meet the lady, and where his skiff waited to take them to New York.

The Express was at his wit's end. All the expedition of his journey seemed about to be sacrificed, for he put no faith in the tavern keeper's sincerity. He had begun to consider the prospect of completing the distance on foot, or until he could find a more speedy



conveyance. Then the owner of the stage horses plucked him by the sleeve, whispering that he had another horse which he would part with for the good of the cause, though no other inducement would prevail on him to give up an old and faithful family servitor.

In return for the sacrifice, being a shrewd Connecticut Yankee, he was willing to take Hubbard's exhausted animal and a round sum to boot. This bargain was struck with some modifications, and after much bickering, when the Express had convinced himself that the animal would answer in the absence of a better.

Valuable time had been lost, and it was nearing mid-day when the Express resumed his journey, glad to be rid of the profuse regrets of the tavern keeper, who, he was certain, was in league with the owner of the coach horses.

The brow of the hill gave him a view of the waters of the Sound to the south, and scudding across the sparkling surface he caught a glimpse of a pinnacle which doubtless carried the lady and gentleman of the tavern. Could he but have secured passage with them it would have taken him to his destination with little delay. This reminded him that the chief cause of his present grievance was that dark-bearded individual whose grip he still felt on his collar, and he inwardly promised himself, should he again meet this person, to pay his respects for the discourtesy with interest.

All his attention was now required by his late purchase, which could only be kept above a walk by con-

stant urging, and at the slightest pretense would stop of its own accord. By dint of much prodding he covered the final stage to Kings Bridge, and the point of meeting with the Murray chariot. His thoughts had previously recurred to the letter, and he had made sure that it was within his coat pocket, when by that association which accompanies the sense of smell, the fragrant perfume from the coach recalled the note anew.

Its delivery afforded him especial gratification, so slight is the stimulus necessary to youth. Every breath of air carried afresh to his senses the delicate fragrance of the scrap of paper. The end of his long journey was in sight, and the thought imparted new energy to his efforts. If his poor nag had groaned before, now it had good cause to bemoan its fate. All weariness was forgotten for the time—even the bright faces in the Murray chariot. A half hour carried him past the little Dutch boweries, scattered and half concealed among the groves of apple and pear trees along the highway, their number increasing as he neared town.



CHAPTER III.

JONATHAN HUBBARD COMES TO TOWN.

The course of the Express was along the Post Road, where it widens into Bowery Lane. In the last half century the lusty growth of this youthful city of New York has carried its homes and shops to Canal Street, and entirely across Manhattan Island, but at the time of the Revolution all above St. Paul's Chapel and the Commons was still open pasture, hill, valley and woodland.* Skirting Bayard Hill the highway wound to the right around a hollow where the waters of the Collect Pond glistened through the foliage—then it swung back in another curve, near the new square, brown-stone jail, on the edge of the Commons.

In the open square before the large brick church a company of Continental soldiers, throwing up an earthwork, had left a narrow opening to the left, down a street arched with trees. It presented a tempting coolness sheltered from the sun, and offered an easier movement to the jaded horse, which selected this course unchecked by the Express.

A pleasant breeze swept up this suburban way. The cottages, back a little from the street, were closely

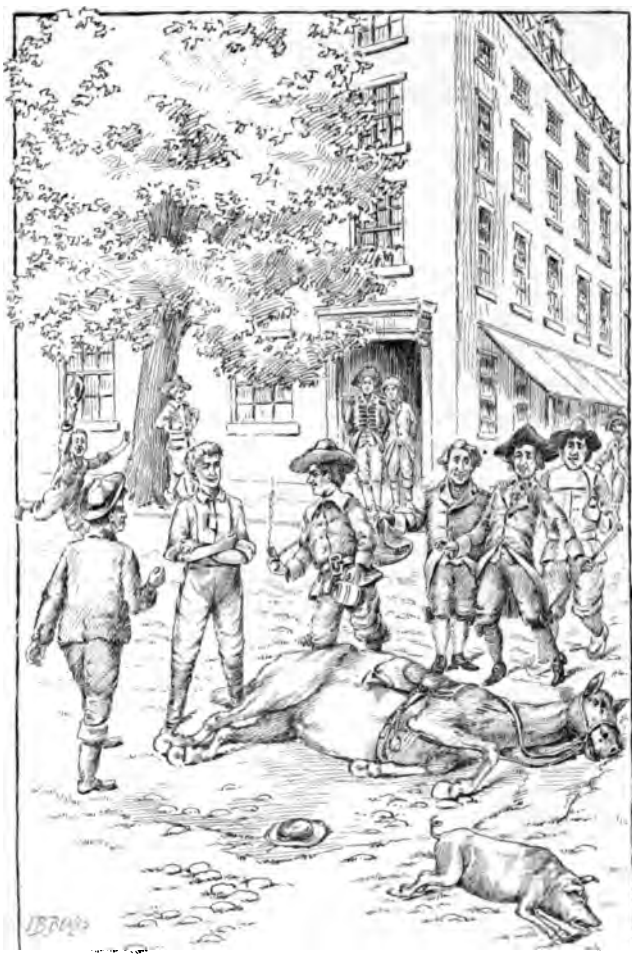
* This early part of General Hubbard's journal appears to have been written by him about the year 1825, when hill and woodland had been recently leveled, and streets laid out upon them.

grouped in town fashion. There were fewer dogs, pigs and children. The roadway was less dusty, with fewer holes for pigs and children to wallow in. At the clatter of hoofs and the horse's wheezing, cottagers rushed to their doorways, wondering what had caused an express to leave the Post Road for Nassau Lane, and the problem was still being pondered when its subject had entered the wider area of Broad Street, followed by an increasing crowd into the heart of the town.

A public house befitting a patriot courier appeared presently, before which, in the shade of a broad-spreading buttonwood, two officers of rank were conversing. The Express straightened to pull up his weary steed when a trivial accident had nearly put an end to this history before it had fairly begun.

The unlucky beast came to a sudden stand on the verge of a hog-wallow, out of which two mud-coated hogs rushed pell-mell with grunts of protest. The horses' knees gave way and the rider went over the horse's head—by good chance alighting feet first on the opposite side of the mudhole.

For the nonce the Express looked about him dazed. His gasping animal made no effort to rise. Its sides rose and fell like a blacksmith's bellows, and the crowd came up, taking this performance with a crowd's delight, as given especially for its benefit. A motley throng it was from every quarter of the thirteen colonies, military and civilian, touched with the spirit of camp, and irreverent, as New York crowds were coming to be known.



“His gasping animal made no effort to rise.” *Page 18.*





One bystander observed that the "hoss" was laid up for the night; and another, as the horse stretched himself in the cool mud with a groan of content, that it must be of kin to the hog family. A third intimated that the owner had a contract to fill up hog-wallows. These pleasantries, attended by noisy outbursts of mirth, seemed ill-timed and in bad taste to the Express, accustomed to the courtesy extended a stranger in his New England home. But he overlooked them, assuming a propitiatory smile, and puckering his lips in a low whistle as he centred his attention on the fallen horse.

The humor of the crowd might have passed here with the intimation that the stranger was an express, but for a heavy, black-browed fellow in a fuzzy, yellow suit.

"A Yankee Express, jes' cum tew taown!" cried he, pushing forward and howling the popular refrain of the day:

"Yankee Doodle's cum tew taown,
Ridin' on a pony;
Stuck a feather in his hat,
And call him a Macaronie.'"

with variations that the crowd caught, shouting its approval.

"Be ye from Coscob or Squedunck, Express?" continued the fellow in the fuzzy coat. Hubbard felt it beneath the dignity of an official express to notice such ribald comment. The blood rose to his temples, notwithstanding, at the unseemingly levity. He smiled more feebly, casting a glance in the direction of the two

officers with a hope that, recognizing his official character, they might relieve his embarrassment.

The elder of these was of commanding, military presence, in uniform of rich cut and cloth, cocked hat, the hair powdered and tied back with a silk ribbon, ruffs at the cuffs, shirt front of spotless linen, and silver buckles at the knees and on the shoes. His companion was younger, of slender and boyish figure, a face tanned and delicate, but strong in outline. His uniform of buff and blue was plain beside that of the other, to whom he listened attentively, maintaining as well a keen and quick observance the while of what was going on about them.

"Gad! That was a pretty fall, Burr," cried the elder officer at the Express' mishap.

"'Tis an express, I fancy, Chevalier," returned the other, scrutinizing Hubbard.

"Who knows! He'd break his neck to repeat the trick. These Yorkers have caught the jib of the rascal."

"Show your papers, Yankee!" cried the man in the fuzzy suit as the Express edged away. The dispatches, loosened in the fall, were protruding from his coat, and before he was aware the man had plucked them out. Hubbard sprang upon his tormentor with a cry of alarm, seizing the documents, the rush tumbling the fellow over the horse at full length in the mire.

He scrambled to his feet flaming with wrath at the jeers of the crowd, now turned upon him. A friendly voice whispered to Hubbard, who replaced his papers



JONATHAN HUBBARD COMES TO TOWN. 21

securely, to slip away; but much as he doubtless would have liked being elsewhere at the moment, and bewildered at this turn of his affairs, the Express had no thought of retreat. His mountain stock was as tough as his native hickory. He set his teeth, while his cheek paled, to the onset of the bully—but midway a resounding cuff on the side of the head whirled back the fellow, who turned on his new assailant with an oath.

This was a robust figure in a loose, buckskin hunting costume and an officer's cockade on the side of his hat.

"Out with ye!" he growled like a mastiff, throwing up his arms pugilistic fashion. "Off! or I'll give ye another slam. What! I'll be ——"

His last words were lost—the anger of the man in the fuzzy coat suddenly evaporated at sight of his new opponent, and he sprang through the crowd, dashing down the nearest side street as fast as his heels would take him.

For an instant the officer was at a loss for speech. He burst forth the next with a roar that the welkin hath rarely heard since. Then he sounded a series of shrill, wild-turkey calls from a silver whistle that hung to his neck by a chain, at which, before the notes had died away, three stout backwoodsmen, buckskin-clad, like himself, broke through the crowd as though they had come up out of the earth, and rushed to him.

In a few words the officer pointed out the direction

taken by the man, urging them to spare no exertion for his capture.

"'Tis Gil Forbes, that cowboy thief, or my name's not Dan Morgan!" he exclaimed with emphasis. "I'll count a guinea down in British gold to the man who gets him."

As the men started in pursuit the two officers who had been looking on came up inquiring the cause of the difficulty—the elder complimenting the man in buckskins, pleasantly, on the power of his lungs.

"Cause enough, Conway," replied the other. "An' I had legs as good as lungs the rascal would ride from town to-night on a rail, with a coat of hot tar."

"I'll warrant he'll not soon forget the weight of your fist, Colonel Morgan."

"I did give him a *slam," growled the buckskinned officer, regretting still his oversight.

The crowd looked on with respectful reverence. No officer among the colonial troops was more deservedly popular than Colonel Daniel Morgan, of the Virginia Rifles, whose fame and personal prowess were by-words. He had participated in the ill-fated attempt at Quebec, and been made a prisoner, but having been exchanged, had lately returned to the army in New York. The Express, from whom attention had been drawn, now advanced, respectfully holding his cap, to obtain the notice of this popular hero.

* "A popular expression much in use, even by Washington," General Hubbard notes, "but being forgotten" then, "fifty years later."



"You're the scamp he was after. What's the matter?" demanded Morgan.

"I have an express for General Washington."

"Well, the General's over in Brookline—he won't be back till night."

"Where do you come from?" asked the officer Conway, surveying the Express curiously.

"Over the State of Connecticut line," replied Hubbard with reserve.

"You have knocked up a fine specimen of stock."

"'Twas the best I could get," returned the Express, not wishing to leave a bad impression on so distinguished an officer as this appeared, and he added: "I rode a stock mare nigh on to eighty mile in ten hours before she gave out."

"The devil you did. I should say she would give out."

"An' the little Narragansett gelding I changed for her would have carried me a hundred, I'm thinkin', but he sprained a hind foot."

"Where are you from?" asked Colonel Morgan.

"I left Bos-tin yesterday morning."

"Three hundred miles in forty hours!" cried Conway, incredulous.

"I ought to have been here by noon," replied the Express, modestly.

"Faith, Burr, you were right, we've a born courier here. What name have you?"

"I am Jonathan Hubbard of Hubbardton."

"Give me your papers, Jonathan. You shall be gazetted."

"I'd like to fust rate," replied the Express, with the marked Yankee inflection, but with no intimation of complying.

"Ye catch no Yankee jays with chaff, Conway," laughed Morgan, and added: "Hubbard, you can go with me to the General when he's back if your express is worth the telling."

"I can deliver it only to him," replied the Express, returning his thanks. A black servant appeared on the tavern porch at that moment, interrupting him, blowing with puffed cheeks on a ram's horn, the first summons for dinner.

"Major Burr dines with me to-night. Won't you join us, Colonel?" said Conway.

Morgan accepted the invitation, but looking again to Hubbard and over the crowd. "Here's Corporal Tim Cotton," said he, "whom you can depend on. He will give you a lift with the horse."

A red-haired, broad-shouldered fellow, with a good-natured face, stepped from the crowd and lent the Express a powerful hand as the officers moved away. Major Burr, in the cordial fraternity of youth, and with an intuition that anticipates friendship, held back to inquire where the Express intended to stop, to which Hubbard replied that he knew of no other place than the tavern before them.

"Fraunce's is as good as you will find," said Burr approvingly. "Mention my name to Black Sam and he'll be obliging—don't speak of it," to Hubbard's grateful recognition. "If I can do you a turn let me know."



Major Burr had ever a complacent, not to say a patronizing air in these days which did not, however, affect the Yankee Express unkindly, after his recent experience. Corporal Cotton, with a good-humored smile wrinkling his bushy countenance, extricated Hubbard's personal effects, remarking: "I kalkilate ye warn't expectin' much more sarvice from this critter."

The Express leaving the animal to the care of the tavern hostler, who came up to assist, applied at the tavern for accommodation.

Its host, a swarthy, thick-set man, regarded him with deliberate, critical eye until Hubbard mentioned that Major Burr had directed him. Whereat he at once became affable. This fact the Express did not fail to set down with a satisfaction that he had obtained at least one friend of influence in this indifferent town.

"A friend of the Major's, eh?" said the host. "We'll see what we can do for you."

He was conducted by Billy, the black servant, to a room in the attic. By the time he had secured refreshments, of which he began to feel an increasing need, he calculated that General Washington would have returned to Headquarters. The contents of his dispatch made any delay hazardous. The consequences might prove serious to the leader of the American cause, and to the cause itself. But urgent as his message was, he saw no more immediate means of expediting it.

While removing the marks of travel Billy returned to inform him that his horse had drawn its last breath in the hog-wallow—expiring like a good patriot, the Express reflected, in the service of his country.



CHAPTER IV.

A DINNER AT FRAUNCE'S TAVERN.

The preparations of the Express for dinner were hastened by an appetizing odor, compounded in the kitchen of Fraunce's Tavern, and simmering up to the attic by way of every crook and cranny in the building. It flooded his room with an essence (almost a solid to a youthful stomach that had fasted much in forty-eight hours) productive of frequent sniffs, and smackings of the mouth in anticipation of what was in waiting.

A meal at the tavern had become a greater luxury since the occupation of the town by the colonial troops, and the later arrival of the British fleet. In a community that had ever a weakness for good eating, and a fondness for those who provided it, "Black Sam," so known from his dark skin, was one of the first of the long line of brilliant caterers whose genius has won them fame and fortune.

Following up the warm scent Hubbard entered the large dining room where the clatter of dishes and the hubbub of voices were for the moment confusing as he modestly overlooked the animated scene. The cropped, tow-colored hair, dampened and brushed back, still sprang upward on his long head with a native



obstinacy—now styled Pompadour—that gave character to his face; and the suit of homespun, low shoes and blue yarn stockings, did as much for his general appearance.

A long table extended the length of the room at which the guests in various military and civilian dress had already begun the meal. Colonel Morgan and Hubbard's recent acquaintances were seated at a smaller table on one side. Black Sam presided over guests and attendants like a skilful brigadier, foreseeing and directing fresh supplies, and hurrying up reinforcements where they were required. His eagle glance caught sight of Hubbard as the bluff voice of Morgan directed the Express to a vacant chair beside his own.

"Set the youngster here, Sam," said Morgan, and Hubbard with a flush of pleasure found himself seated opposite Major Burr.

The Chevalier Conway sat at the head, and there were two others at the table. One of these Conway addressed as Colonel Duer. The other, a man of foreign presence, had little to say himself, though he listened with great courtesy when others were speaking the Express noted with some detail as the meal progressed. Conway, he observed, had made changes in his toilette. Major Burr also wore a fringe of lace at his wrists, setting off his hands, which were as white and as delicately formed as a woman's—a fact of which the owner did not appear unconscious, nor of a bright gem on the little finger of his right hand—and he detected, without appearing to, Hubbard's

rapid glance and mental comparison of his own broad and tanned knuckles.

Colonel Morgan, whose costume had undergone no change, replaced a generous pewter flagon of ale upon the table and drew the sleeve of his buckskin coat across his lips, as he recommended Hubbard to help himself freely to the dishes which the host was placing within reach. The appetite of the Express needed no second bidding to follow. But while filling his stomach his New England proclivities were not less occupied, keeping eyes and ears alert to all that was going on about him.

As conversation flowed freely this was no simple task, and his wits were presently severely taxed to hold the thread of all that reached him, and follow at the same time the talk at his own table. It soon appeared by their own estimates that many of those present were persons of military and civic consequence. There were Philadelphia bloods, Baltimore macaronies and Carolina planters, while the swarm of captains, majors and colonels was enough to set the brain of a provincial buzzing. The varied accents were novel to his New England ears, and the uniforms, as striking as Joseph's coat, dazzled the eyes of the Yankee Express, as their free speech perplexed, at first, his understanding.

The military experts asserted, with confidence, that the defeat awaiting the British when they landed would make those of Bunker Hill and Boston pale by comparison. One remarkable scheme was hinted which left it doubtful whether the enemy would even be permitted to land—or, if they were, that any would



remain to tell of their annihilation—while every vessel of the fleet was to be sunk to the bottom of the sea. The Express inwardly congratulated himself on his arrival in time to take part in the extermination, but secretly he was moved to regret the wholesale methods of warfare by which this contest should be so speedily ended.

Instances were told of the valor of companies from one city or State, and others were set down as ignorant of the first principles of war. But his ears were shocked with the criticism of patriots whom he had held beyond reproach. One noted officer was cited as securing places for himself and his entire family—one son being enrolled as a drummer, another as a fifer—all drawing from colonial funds, while others, it was repeated, had publicly allied themselves with politicians to secure profits in army supplies.

"Whom think you, Major Pinckney, I met this very morning carrying his own leg of mutton from market?" exclaimed a spruce, young Philadelphia officer in a bottle-green uniform with polished steel buttons the size of a silver dollar.

"Never could guess, you know, Graydon," returned the other, a dashing young fellow in spotless buff, scarlet waistcoat and fine lace ruffles at the wrists and elbows. "Who was this forager? Had he been out at night like a wolf?"

"None other than Colonel Putnam, the General's cousin—"

"Oh, the Colonel, was it!"

"'Dang it!' he said, 'don't you see? I market for

myself, to set an example to the extravagance of you young sparks!"

"Did he, though?" cried a dozen voices, with a roar of laughter. "Ah, Pinckney, you must reform!"

"But you should see the troop of Connecticut Light Horse that came in yesterday," continued Graydon, when the mirth had subsided. "They are rare and ancient, I assure you—the pride of Connecticut yokels! The years of a dozen of 'em would sum up Methusehlah's."

"Where are they, tell us, Graydon?" cried several of the company.

"They have camped up the island. 'Tis said they have offered their services to General Washington with provision to be exempt from regular duty on the forts."

"Then they are irregulars," observed a wit.

"That they are. Having good plow horses they would not use the pick and spade. They have brought their swords, duck-guns and blunderbusses that came over in the Mayflower, and uniforms that served in Louisburg. Wait but till you see these old Connecticut shagbarks on parade! I promise you they'll take the city by storm."

A fresh burst of mirth that greeted this description flushed the cheek of the Express with anger, and his food had nearly choked him. But the mirth of the party subsided as suddenly when a short, rugged, elderly officer, who wore a faded red coat with tarnished gold fringe rose in his seat, his face and bald head flushed, and the few gray hairs in his bare scalp



bristling, as he looked on the scoffers with suppressed scorn :

"Ye're a peart lot of whipper-snappers!" he broke forth, his sharp black eyes dancing, as soon as his voice permitted. "Ye think ye be the hull of the Continental Army because ye come from Virginny, or Philadelfee! A fine lot of frizzled butterflies when ye've smelt gunpowder burnt! I can tell ye if all the coxcombs and macaronies like ye was out of the army for good it would git better men—Connecticut yokels, without feathers, and with good common sense to fight for the country!"

His indignation choked further utterances, but a lean, rugged companion at his side, with face tanned copper-color, and the manner of an old sea-dog, joined him :

"Them's my sentiments, Seymour, by the great Jehovah!" exclaimed he fiercely. "Anyone as doesn't like 'em be danged, and send his compliments to Captain Glover of Marblehead!"

The attention of the room now centered on this group, and the last speaker was still on his feet when Colonel Morgan's deep voice vibrated through the apartment.

"Captain Glover is right," he declared with deliberate emphasis and a glance around him. "Any man from Virginia who makes sport of his fellow soldiers ought to be drummed out of camp. We're here, men, to fight the British, not to row among ourselves. There's no better men in the thirteen colonies to-day, I tell ye, than Colonel Seymour and his Connecticut Horse.

Not one of ye will ever see harder fightin' than he has!"

This storm of rebuke, brought down on themselves, abashed the scoffers, but when Colonel Morgan had finished the young officer of the scarlet waistcoat, rising, brushed his lips carefully with a fine, lace-bordered handkerchief and bowed with grace to the assembled company.

"Colonel Seymour," said he, "and gentlemen, I owe you a respectful apology for hasty words of my own, and I am sure I may say as much for my friends. We are not here, 'tis true, as Colonel Morgan has well said, to make sport of our countrymen by word or jest. We are bound together against British aggression. This broad land we claim for freedom and decent speech, and no man's coat shall prejudice his worth. What has been said, sir, cannot be unsaid, but you will, I hope, take our foolish remarks as foolishly made, not with intent to give offense to a brave soldier and patriot. I am, sir, one of those macaronies you mentioned, of the staff of Colonel Smallwood, of Baltimore, sir. I offer you my hand and our hearty apology, and I propose a toast that we shall all drink to Colonel Seymour and the Connecticut Light Horse, and to American liberty!"

The toast was drunk standing by all in the room, after which Graydon and the rest gathered about the veterans, repeating the sentiments of the last speaker. The prompt and frank acknowledgment appeased the veteran Seymour, whose face continued flushed, not-



withstanding, but with good feeling restored, the remainder of the meal.

The dinner, served after American custom, in two courses, made steady progress. With the first course that filled the tables when the guests entered, were fish, flesh and vegetables in abundance—fine blue fish and mackerel from the Lower Bay despite the presence of the British fleet; great red lobsters from Hell Gate reefs, whose sides were attacked with as much vigor as the assailants would charge the red coats of their enemies, offered a range of choice with roast joints of beef or mutton, and platters of young chicken.

As a guide for himself the Express noted that the guests divided their attentions, impartially, between the several dishes, varied with frequent reinforcements of potatoes, steaming ears of corn, or hot ladles of succotash. Black Sam looked on with conscious diffidence, accepting compliments as one who had earned them, but still expecting them. The dishes gave way at his direction when the more substantial part of the meal had been disposed of, to a second course, berries from neighboring gardens, and, on this occasion, a green apple pie—the first of the season—in a deep dish, and cut in large, triangular slices.

At the smaller table the conversation took a wide range, under the direction of the Chevalier Thomas Conway. Of Irish birth and high French reputation for military experience, Conway was one of the first foreign officers to tender service to the colonies, confident that his qualifications would be in request—though, as yet, in the few weeks since his arrival in

the country, they had made no perceptible impression on the Commander-in-chief. A ready wit and fluent speech enabled him from some acquaintance with European courts and topics, to touch freely on current gossip, interspersing it with comments on distinguished personages. These included dukes, duchesses, and princes of the blood—all slipping easily from the tongue, intimating the extended circle of his connections, and drawing forth the admiration, not merely of the Express from the provinces, but of most of those within the speaker's hearing.

Colonel Duer, New Yorker of eminence, who had seen service with Clive in India, was visibly impressed, though his companion, whom he introduced as Monsieur Bonvouloir, the agent of a large mercantile house in Antwerp, did not manifest so great an interest as might have been expected. At times, it appeared to Hubbard, these remarks caused him to regard Conway with a show of surprise.

This Monsieur Bonvouloir, who Colonel Duer observed was returning from the southern colonies, where he had made large purchases of tobacco for shipment to his house, interested the Express. He wore his own hair long, and in place of being tied in a queue, the fashion of the day, it fell free in a wavy, dark mass at the back, and at the temples it was quite gray, though he still appeared young. His features were striking—the eyes dark blue with an absent air, touched with melancholy, and his figure, or his bear-

ing, had something military at moments, in contrast with an extremely plain civilian dress.

Conway, being served with wine, invited the others at his table to participate. He discoursed fluently on military topics, setting forth the merits of Marlborough, Turenne and Condé as the most eminent captains of modern times. Colonel Morgan had declined the wine, as reminding him of red ink, at which the host produced a flask of Jersey applejack, that was more to the rifleman's taste; he observed with a profound smack of the lips that it was the only respectable beverage made from fruit, excepting always good old peach brandy.

The first course of the dinner had been completed at this point, when the entrance of two late arrivals caused a lull in the general clatter. As attention was turned upon them, Black Sam advanced quickly, and with much deference, seated them at the table with the Conway party. One of these, a corpulent, elderly gentleman in a snuffy brown suit, and coat with broad frock skirts, nodded genial greetings to many present as he took his seat. His shrewd, kindly and intelligent features, seemed particularly familiar to the Express, and Conway arose, bowing with great courtesy. :

"I esteem it a great pleasure," said he, "to meet you once more, Dr. Franklin, and that in your own country."

"Not more than it affords me, Chevalier, to greet you as one of us rebels," said Dr. Benjamin Franklin with the smile and easy self-possession of one used to deference. He bowed to the party, presenting his

companion: "My friend, Mr. Thomas Paine, gentlemen, an Englishman by birth, but with us in heart—a lover of liberty."

Mr. Paine barely more than nodded his head in response, seating himself quickly, and showing greater concern in the dishes which Black Sam hastened in afresh for his belated guests.

A sense of awe and elation expanded the Express at this unlooked-for presence of one whom New England traditions taught him to regard as among the greatest of living men. He could, with difficulty, remove his eyes from Dr. Franklin, from which attention he did not fail to observe, as the bright glance of the distinguished philosopher swept round the table, that it rested for an instant with a distinct lowering of one eyelid—whether voluntary or not, a perceptible wink—on the French tobacco merchant. Hubbard could not tell if this recognition were mutual, or if it had been observed by others, except from an expression of inquiry in the face of Major Burr, by which he inferred that it had also been noted by him.

"You will honor us, Dr. Franklin," said Conway, "by drinking a glass of wine, regardless of its quality?"

"I pledge you my regards, Chevalier." Dr. Franklin touched the glass lightly to his lips. "Mr. Paine and myself arrived late from Philadelphia, and we became so engrossed in a discussion as to forget the late hour, for which I owe apologies to our good host."

"Sam will see to it that you do not suffer."

"I do not doubt it," the genial philosopher smiled



with quiet humor. "'Tis never with the food I complain when the surroundings are so pleasant as these. When a lad at my father's table we were taught to find no fault with what was set before us, for in good company we would never think of the food but as the best."

He sipped the wine at intervals, eating slowly and sparingly as he talked, but a flush showed presently in either cheek, and his eyes twinkled more brightly. His companion made all amends for any lack of attention to the meal, the contents of his plate disappearing rapidly, and the process being several times repeated. Mr. Paine had at first glance the appearance of a day laborer, his shoulders slightly stooped, his dress negligent, and his smooth face showing trace of an unshaven beard. The thin hair was scattered over a broad, high forehead, which lowered upon deep-set eyes, now intent on the meal, but not so much abstracted, the Express saw, as to disregard what was passing.

Dr. Franklin talked with Colonel Morgan on his prison experience in Canada, when, the second course having been finished, pipes and tobacco were produced. The conversation returned presently to military experience, Conway insisting on a more thorough organization, and the need of drill and discipline in the colonial troops, to which Dr. Franklin assented.

"That is the foundation of all military success," he said. "Cæsar must organize and drill his legions before their short swords can conquer the world."

"And with trained legions a general will conquer,"

said Conway; "without him the legions are no better than an ox-team without a driver."

"You must have a purpose and a faith in rank and file, as well," said the man Paine, in a strong voice. "Given two armies, equally trained, I would promise victory to that with a purpose like Cromwell's Ironsides or a faith like Mohammed's Mussulmans."

"Doubtless," returned Conway, carelessly, "but I can cite you an instance less ancient. Sir Henry Clinton had it in mind recently to occupy New York until he learned that General Charles Lee, a soldier known over all Europe, was here. Sir Henry knew Lee, and he sailed for Charleston instead, where Lee was again before him, with what result we all know."

"Monsieur Bonvouloir may tell us more of that," added Colonel Duer. "He is but just come from Charleston."

"I can hardly, I fear, confirm Monsieur Conway," replied the French merchant politely, in good English, with a slight accent.

"But you know that General Lee directed the defense."

"I do not question General Lee's military experience, Monsieur, but I doubt if it would have made a difference in this instance, had he arrived later instead of in advance of Sir Henry Clinton."

"On what grounds do you base such a statement, Monsieur?" demanded Conway, annoyed.

"The fortifications were complete on General Lee's arrival," replied the merchant, without appearing to notice the peremptory tone of the inquiry. "General



Lee laughed at the palmetto logs, and ordered them torn down, which General Moultrie, who did not agree with him, declined to do. It was these palmetto logs in the bombardment that caught the British cannon balls and held them fast, protecting the Americans behind them."

"So, then," exclaimed Conway, puffing smoke violently from his cigar, "it was palmetto logs according to your idea, that won."

"Pardon, Monsieur, that is the public sentiment in Charleston."

"But the Commander-in-chief, Monsieur, commends General Lee for the defense. Perhaps you were behind these same palmetto logs?"

"I had that pleasure, Monsieur."

"And you are a military expert since," returned Conway, with a curl of the lip.

"I am a tobacco merchant, Monsieur," replied the Frenchman calmly, but with more accent and a glow in his blue eyes.

"And tobacco, Chevalier, is a great product in America," interposed Dr. Franklin, the tension becoming strong. "Our Commander-in-chief is a tobacco merchant in peace times. You military men would have little chance to display fine strategy but for the merchants and our merchandise. Do you not think so?" he added, turning to Morgan.

"I know nothin' about them short swords ye were talkin' of," replied the rifleman. "They may do on your side of the water, Conway. But give me a corps of good rifles with picked flints, plenty of ball and dry

powder and I reckon to care for double our number in a square fight with ye're Lejuns, before they were clost enough for their short swords, or their baganets, either."

The laughter and applause that greeted this response dispelled all clouds, even from Conway's flushed face.

"I'll stand to that," continued the speaker, bringing down his fist like a trip-hammer on the table. "I've tried it on the Injuns with their tomahawks, and they're not far behind your Lejuns. You can risk your scalp on that."

"I would trust Morgan's rifles against the legions," replied Dr. Franklin cordially.

"Do you consider, Dr. Franklin," asked Major Burr in a deferent spirit, "that we are greatly advanced over those Romans, who ruled the world before gunpowder was known?"

"I have no doubt of it, my young friend," replied the philosopher, dilating on an attractive theme. "We have surely advanced in many practical arts, as we have dropped some of the Roman vices."

"But," ventured Hubbard, recalling Harvard debates, "Sir William Temple held the contrary, though I never could agree with him."

"Had Sir William cultivated the present, as he did his Dutch gardens, his conclusions would be of more value now," replied Dr. Franklin, and, regarding the company: "Were I to have one wish, my friends, it would be to awaken in the twentieth century, if only for a few hours. I should like to see what this country of ours—what the world has accomplished, in that



time. I am persuaded that we are to-day setting forth an influence for the better of mankind, and this nation will have become, in another century, one of the greatest the world has seen." The cheeks of the venerable patriot were glowing, and his eyes sparkling with fervor.

"But the distances are great," said Conway. "This lad here, nodding at Hubbard, 'has just ridden from Boston hither, in forty hours, by night and day. The journey may not be done in comfort in less than three days I can testify."

"You did ride from Boston in forty hours?" repeated Dr. Franklin, regarding the Express with interest. "'Twas good time. But if you come to my years, I doubt not, it may seem long; and that you may see it often done, and with comfort, 'twixt sunrise and sunset."

It was already past sunset, and the attendants were lighting candles. One of the riflemen who had pursued Hubbard's assailant entered and informed Colonel Morgan that the chase had been unsuccessful, the man having eluded them in the swamp. Morgan directed that a description of Forbes be posted with the guard, for his capture, if he remained near town. The rifleman stated that General Washington and staff and General Putnam had passed up Wall Street from the ferry to headquarters, where the General was to stop before going out to Richmond Hill.

Colonel Morgan rose at once to depart, repeating that Hubbard might accompany him if his dispatches would not keep until morning. The Express, who

had been getting uneasy despite the good table and the distinguished company, sprang up with the word. His dispatches were urgent, he replied to the officer, as they left the room together. They must be delivered without fail that evening, for they related directly to the good of the country.



CHAPTER V.

THE BOSTON DISPATCHES.

Colonel Morgan, followed by the Express, turned through a narrow side street from the tavern. Passing up a slight ascent they entered an open, triangular green over which several sturdy trees stood sentinel, their great trunks distinguishing them as survivors of the native forest, older than the settlement of the town.

The sea air from the Bay swept in a refreshing breeze over this little common. Leading from it to the north a wide and thickly built thoroughfare, which Morgan pointed out as Broad Way Street, was filled with a gay, moving throng, laughing and chatting as on some gala occasion. Oil lamps were suspended from many of the houses, but not lighted, as the full moon was up—a calculation that was never overlooked in the thrifty practices transmitted by the early Dutch burghers of New York.

Hubbard's conductor observed that this was Bowling Green, where the Liberty boys had bowled over a statue of old King George—a circumstance that he appeared to connect with the name—and turned him into good rifle bullets. The soldiers in uniform among the throng with frolicking maidens on either arm, were hardly in accord with the serious notion the Express

had formed of a patriot city entering on the extremity of a siege. Something of this he intimated, at which the robust colonel remarked that if he stayed long in York he would find that the town was more given to frolic than to church and fasting, as the custom was down in Bostin.

They crossed the green to a broad, substantial, stone residence, occupied as army headquarters. Its owner, Captain Kennedy, had taken himself and family to the British fleet, in which he was an officer, on first notice of its arrival. The households of the commanding officers were in different parts of the town, that of Washington at Richmond Hill, a mile on the outskirts overlooking the Hudson.

A squad of horses stood before the house, the riders dismounted, and chatting with the sentinels, who in the spruce uniform of the Washington Guard, with guns and bayonets fixed, were pacing leisurely to and fro—not in a strict, soldierly fashion, it appeared to the Express, with his knowledge of the contents of the dispatches. An officer halted them at the entrance, but recognizing Colonel Morgan saluted with familiarity.

"The General is back, Hickey?" inquired Morgan, returning the salute.

"He's inside, Colonel. We're starving to get out to the Hill for rations. I wish ye could hurry them up," returned the officer of the guard, barring the entrance of Hubbard, who was inspecting him closely.

"Let him pass, Sergeant. He is with me," said Morgan.

"The orders is to let no one pass without a permit,



but I s'pose it's all right with you, Colonel," and the guard reluctantly, and with a suspicious scrutiny of Hubbard, gave way.

They entered a broad hallway in the centre of the house. A negro boy opened a polished, mahogany door to the left, and called out the name of Colonel Morgan, as he ushered them into a large reception room. This had been one of the parlors of the mansion which the family, in their hasty departure, had left carpeted and furnished. Its walls and ceiling elaborately frescoed, were lighted by clusters of candles, in gilt candelabra suspended from the ceiling, and at intervals around the sides of the room. The family portraits still hung from the walls. In the deep recesses of the long windows, which reached nearly to the floor, the heavy lambrequins were rolled back tightly, and curtains of lace rustled, and were reflected in the full-length mirrors at either end of the room.

Colonel Morgan crossed to a group of officers conversing in low tones, at one side, and was heartily received. Hubbard kept close at his heels, but left to himself, had no difficulty in distinguishing the Commander-in-chief. He stood a little apart, conversing with an elderly officer of short and stocky figure, ruddy-cheeked, and wearing his own gray hair and no wig, and who, it appeared presently, in the course of his voluble and energetic comments, was General Israel Putnam.

Washington listened attentively. He had the insight from contact and direct acquaintance with

affairs and men, which imparts confidence. A shade of humor lighted up and relaxed the gravity of his face, at some emphatic expression, to which he inclined his head in assent, or put a question, that served to increase the nervous vigor of the speaker. He looked up with a friendly recognition at Morgan's entrance, which was returned with more deference than the Express had yet noted on the part of the Virginian rifleman.

The Commander's tall and flexible figure was noticeable, even among a group of officers, who, like Greene, Knox, Knowlton or Morgan, were men above the average weight and stature. The long body and shapely limbs reminded the Express of a hound with trained, hardened, and staying powers. His military dress of buff and blue, fitted scrupulously in contrast with the more careless costumes of General Putnam and the others.

At forty-three the young Commander-in-chief was in the prime of his physical vigor, passions and mental powers. His face was plain and touched with small-pox, but strong in outline, with something of reserve and diffidence in repose. Its force and dignity grew with acquaintance. Trumbull, better than any other, has caught in the earlier portraits the fire and purpose of the soldier in crisis and peril—as those who have seen him at such times may testify—before later experiences and responsibilities brought increased self-reliance and resource.

A sword of Washington's rested against the writing table, beside which he and Putnam were standing



—the other officers were in full uniform, and several carried their swords or small arms. Their conversation lulled at intervals as they looked to the chiefs, expecting that the conference was soon to end, but Putnam was full of an invention by a Connecticut Yankee for sinking the British ships when they should be entrapped on the Hudson. At an interval Washington turned to an officer who was talking with Morgan, and whose calm, strong face had attracted the *Express*.

"I think General Greene will agree with us," said he, "that your scheme had best be tried at once. It will not call for great expense."

"It promises well," replied Greene, advancing, "and no time need be lost. The 'Duchess of Gordon,' Tryon's ship, went up the river yesterday. If she remains there others are sure to follow and may make trouble for us."

"We can send at once to Philadelphia for the material," Washington continued, reflecting. "Colonel Morgan leaves for the South to-morrow, and may take word. You have returned sooner than I expected, Colonel," he added, coming forward. "How did you find General Schuyler?"

"As well as could be expected," replied Morgan. "It's like pulling teeth to get things together up State. An' there's fresh rumor of a big expedition from Canada."

"Hardly like to be a move in that direction, I think, before something is done here. You intend to start South at once?"

"I want to get down home and make up a regiment for business."

"Yes; you cannot be ready too soon," Washington returned, somewhat absently, regarding at the same time the Express, who, moving forward with Colonel Morgan, stood with modest insistence at a little distance. "Who is this?"

"An Express from Bosting, General, with a special, he says, so I took him in."

Hubbard advanced respectfully, taking from his pocket the packet of which he had been so nearly relieved, and gave it to Washington. The General stepped to his table, examining the seal, and then broke open the dispatch. After a glance he seated himself so that the candlelight fell directly on the paper as he read it with evident care.

General Putnam conversed for a moment with the officers in low voice, as before, when, as Washington was still occupied, the conversation ceased, the attention centered on him, and on the Express who stood awaiting inquiries. Nothing in the face of Washington intimated the nature of the dispatch. When he had finished the first reading he went over the communication again, with greater care. Then he re-examined the seal minutely and turned abruptly to the Express.

"This dispatch is dated yesterday, Sunday?" he said.

"I left Bos-tin Sunday morning with it," replied the Express.

"Sunday—yesterday morning?" repeated the General, a shade of suspicion in his tone as he looked again



at the paper, and from it to Hubbard. "Do you know its contents?"

"They were told me. I expected to get here by noon. I was to make all speed to deliver it to you."

"You have done well, Hubbard," said Washington, at which a flush of pleasure spread over the face of the Express. He put several additional inquiries in relation to the journey, and the Boston Committee, listening to Hubbard's replies without comment, as if his thoughts were passing over and beyond him. Then taking a pen, the General wrote briefly on a slip of paper.

"Captain Webb!" said he, reading over what he had written, and sprinkling it from the pounce box as his secretary, a stalwart young officer, came forward.

"Have you seen Sergeant Hickey this evening?"

"I spoke to him in front on your return, General."

"He is then on duty to-night?"

"Yes, your Excellency. He inquired especially when you would leave for the Hill."

"Do you know if Privates Green and Johnson are also on duty?"

"They are both, I think, assigned for the week. I can find out in a moment."

"Do not do that," said Washington, checking him. "Take this paper. It is an order for arrest. Major Tilghman will go with you," handing the paper to Captain Webb as the second officer mentioned came forward. "You will secure a file of soldiers from the Fort—not of the Guard, and place under arrest the three I have just named, Sergeant Hickey, and Pri-

vates Green and Johnson. Their names are written here. Make the arrests quietly, quickly and with caution, attracting as little attention as possible. Do not speak of it to anyone nor attempt the arrest until you have the soldiers with you to take the prisoners to the Fort."

The officers indicated their full understanding of the instructions, and saluting had nearly reached the door, when Washington recalled them with a sudden recollection.

"Captain Webb, permit me to look at that order again?" and Webb returned it.

"Ah, yes," with the trace of a smile. "I have neglected to place the queue on the t." The omission was remedied by crossing the "t" in his signature, with his own peculiar flourish, after which he again sprinkled the paper and returned it to the officers.

"Thank you," he added. "'Tis now correct"

When the door had closed upon them the Commander-in-chief turned to the group who had followed with intense interest the significance of these proceedings, and now gave all attention.

"There is evidence here, gentlemen," said he in an even voice, "that our suspicions and the rumors of the past week have not been unfounded. The matter of it is somewhat vague, but it confirms, I think, what we already know. And while it calls for immediate action, I think you will agree with me that it had best, for the time, remain secret with those of us present."

They gathered about the Commander-in-chief as he read the contents of the dispatch. Not an easy task, as



the average handwriting, as well as the composition and spelling of fifty years ago were usually marked with the characteristics of the writer. This document, which stands on record, was no exception, and read as follows:—

To his Excell'ncy General George Washington Com-mander-in-Chief of the Armies of the United Colonies of America:

We have toe Convey toe Your Excell'ncy the Tidings of a most Infernal Plot that has been Hatched by ye Dyeabolicul Enemies of America and ye Sacred Cause of Liberty, Which should it bee put intoe Execution would make ye Whole World toe Trembel. And would bee as Fatal a Stroke toe ye Cause as Gun-powder Treason toe England had It succeeded.

The Hellish Conspirators are a Band of ye Bloody minded tories including ye former governor Tryon of ye Province of New York, and certain Members of ye own Body Guard toe wit:

One Thomas Hickey a Sargent in said Guard. And two Privets by name Green and Johnson.

These Bloody Villians by ye aid of one Gil Forbes a Gunsmith and a party of 700 tories which is toe March over ye Kings Bridge and is now in Camp on ye Hites of Fordam near by ye said Bridge do propose toe seeze by Force the Person of Your Excell'ncy by Night and unbeknownst at your Quarters of Richmond Hill.

Ye same Forbes wears a Yaller suit of Fuzzy close And is toe Deliver Your Excell'ncy to the Power and Custardy of ye Bloody governor Tryon Dead or Alive who will bee waiting this Villinous Plot on Board his Warshippe Dutchiss of Gordon which is toe sail up ye Hudson river and Lie in wait for ye Purpose.

The same Forbes is to Burn ye Kings Bridge toe Prevent pursuit. And Your Excell'ncy is toe bee Transported toe England and placed in ye Bloody Tower at ye Mercie of ye British Tryant and His Myrmeedons toe bee tryed and Executed as a Rebel.

So much for these Hell Hounds and trecherus enemees of Freedom whose Vile Skeemes have been disclosed toe us in a Letter writ from New York by a Woman who Discovered the Wicked Plans.

We have Urged our Express Jonathan Hubbard who is a True Patriot toe make Great speed and Spare naught toe Lay this Information before you. And make Request on all good Patriots toe Provide him with Hosses and Fodder and Drinke and Foode for himself. And all Further Expense to bee Defrayed by ye Town of New York for ye Frustration of ye Villinus Plot.

And ye Bloody Villins should receive a proper Punishment like a Perpetual Itching without ye Benefits of Scratching.

Committee of Safety, Boston.

"'Tis an ill-spelled bloody and parlous document," jauntily observed Adjutant Joseph A. Reed, a tall and confident Philadelphia officer.

"I was never much at spelling myself," continued Washington, "but the content is here of more import than the spelling."

"By the Lord!" cried Morgan, "I smelt mischief afoot this afternoon when I caught that rascal Forbes."

"You have caught him?" exclaimed several in a voice.

"Well, I gave him a slam," Morgan replied, relating the incident.

Colonel Knox thought Forbes' presence argued a



purpose to carry out the attempt that very night, while Colonel Knowlton believed his detection might defer the scheme if it had been so planned.

"It's true as gospel!" said General Putnam emphatically. "Tryon went up the river yesterday in the Duchiss o' Gordon, and she's lying off the Spitting Duyvil. My idee is to put an ambush on Richmond Hill and catch the whole pack."

"What do you think of this, General?" said Washington, turning to Greene.

"It looks probable, whether for to-night or not; but they are sure to get some hint or suspicion of our discovery."

"Well," said General Putnam, "I should like to know who that woman is that writ the information."

"Ah, General," replied Colonel Knox, and the rest, including Washington, smiled. "You would not ask too much of women—and you have the Duchess of Gordon up the river."

"If a party went up the island by the Greenwich Road," pursued General Greene, "and another by the Post Road over to Bloomingdale, they could meet at the Hoofland Farm by midnight. No large body of troops would escape them of a moonlight night like this, if it did pass our troops further up."

This suggestion met with approval, and an advanced detail of scouts directed by Colonel Knowlton was dispatched forthwith to ascertain and report at the Hoofland Farm if any body of troops had crossed at Kings Bridge, or elsewhere, that night.

Washington decided to return as usual to Richmond Hill, after a report of the situation had been received, and a special detail placed on duty there. Hubbard continued to stand at a little distance during this conference, and the General's attention returning to him, he placed a large hand kindly on the shoulder of the Express.

"After the creditable manner in which you have discharged your instructions I will see that your services are fully repaid," he said.

"I don't want pay," flushed the Express at this interpretation of his patriotism. "I want to enlist."

"General," said Morgan, "the lad's got good stuff in him. He knocked out four horses carrying his orders from Bosting."

Hubbard presented his credentials, which Washington read, then speaking to a thin, dark man of the company, whose glance was keen and searching.

"Colonel Trumbull, I would recommend this young man as an aide for the Commissary, which you said yesterday you needed. Will you see him cared for and repaid any outlay he has been put to?"

"I guess I can," replied this officer in a rasping voice; "if he'll do half as well looking after supplies."

But the Express did not appear elated. "I would like active service," he replied, with Yankee bluntness. "I don't want to be a cattle driver."

"Colonel Morgan will tell you, Hubbard, that the Commissary is never wanting in active service," observed the Commander, his face relaxing.

General Putnam was to direct the plan of action, and



while it was being outlined the Express stepped to the window, where a cool breeze swept in from the Bay. From the recess he could look out upon the waters tossing in the light of the yellow, summer moon—and over and beyond, in fancy, he could see the British camp-fires and the ships of their fleet. His pulse beat high at the prospect, long hoped for, now open before him. Youth and fervor were conscious of no weariness, despite the tension of the past two days, and he determined on applying to accompany one of these parties on the night's expedition.

Captain Webb and Major Tilghman returning, reported that the arrests had been effected without attracting attention. The prisoners were securely lodged within the Fort. Captain Webb repeated in a low voice a confidential communication to Washington, on which he inquired: "In how long a time?"

"Within half an hour," replied Captain Webb.

"I shall then be occupied for the next hour with Dr. Franklin," returned Washington aloud, instructing his secretary.

The plans having been satisfactorily arranged, Generals Putnam and Greene departed with the company to put them into execution and to capture the conspirators if their attempt was made this night. The Commander-in-chief returned their salute, and the door closed, leaving him alone beside his desk.



CHAPTER VI.

A DIPLOMATIC INCIDENT.

Washington crossed the room after the officers had left, turning the key in the door, and walking slowly, several times, up and down the length of the apartment. Then glancing at his watch he sat down at the table, picking up a packet of quills, which he tested critically on his thumb nail for the selection of one that should please him. Having disposed of several official papers which required his signature, he devoted himself to the entries of a diary, writing with scrupulous care and sprinkling each page before turning, to avoid a blot.

No trace of disquiet appeared in his manner, though the scheme disclosed in the Boston dispatches was neither so wild or unfeasible—later in the war such attempts were repeated with success by both parties. At this time rumors of plots and intrigues were rife on all sides, and the British were preparing for a final effort to crush this rebellion with superior force, or preferably, if possible, by diplomatic arts. It had been protracted too long for the credit of the government. And the open sympathy of France only in part suppressed by a weak display of authority—indicated that



merely the opportunity and a pretext were needed to reopen the old feud between the two nations.

The first warm support of the colonial cause in New York had cooled, perceptibly, since actual separation from England had been openly discussed, and a strong fleet and army were exerting the influence of their presence on the timid. Doubts of colonial success daily became more frequent and outspoken. Many leading and more conservative citizens were taking a neutral position, and with the whispers of impending disaster, there were hints of trials for treason in which Washington, Franklin, Hancock and other leaders would pay the penalty with their heads.

This solitary figure at the desk might have suggested the peaceful occupation of a private gentleman in the seclusion of his own home, rather than one on whom the attention of the world was beginning to turn, and whose removal at this time, by accident or design, must have changed the course of the world's history.

On returning the diary to its place in the desk Washington selected several sheets of paper on which he began a letter to his wife, indited in a clear, round hand: "My Own Dear Patsey." The matter of this, with its suggestions of domestic affairs effacing official responsibilities for the moment, appeared more pleasing as he continued to write. A shade of tenderness, touched with a quiet humor, marked the current of his thoughts, and lighted his face with an occasional smile.

A clamor of distant voices on the street came in at the window. But the flutter of a moth in a perilous

inspection of the candles, the rustle of the swaying curtains, and the scratching of the pen were the only distinct sounds in the silence of the room—save at irregular intervals a strange, low, muffled murmur appeared to well up from without and die away in the room. Once this curious sound, louder and nearer at hand, caused the writer to pause and listen, but hearing no more, he continued his occupation with no further attention to it.

So engrossed had he become that a slight tap at the side door, opposite the main entrance from the street, failed to attract his notice. The knock was twice repeated, when, having finished the letter, he was about to read it over, the rapping, louder than before, directed his attention.

Stepping quickly to the door Washington unfastened and threw it open without hesitation. The passage beyond was dimly lighted by a candle, and so narrow that the tall frame of a man enveloped in a cloak and a broad slouch hat, nearly filled it. The man entered, bending his head in recognition as he spoke in a low, strong voice:

"France, Monsieur!"

Washington, having closed and secured the door, faced the stranger.

"Monsieur Bonvouloir?" he replied.

"The same," returned the newcomer, removing his hat and a light riding cloak. He was of supple figure, and nearly as tall as the American officer, though younger by a full score of years. His dress was the same as it had been an hour earlier at Fraunce's Tav-



ern, with the addition of a sword that emphasized his military bearing. After the rapid survey on the part of each, as if with a desire to gather at a glance the outer characteristics of one not previously known, the Frenchman, with the impulse of his race, was the first to speak, his earnestness of manner indicating that his words were more than conventional compliment.

"Your Excellency will permit me to express my great pleasure in meeting the leader of the cause of human liberty."

"I thank you, Monsieur. Will you be seated?" Washington replied, placing a chair near his desk, and resuming his own while he continued to regard his guest. "I trust you were not long waiting. I was writing and may not have heard you at first."

Monsieur Bonvouloir, as he threw a hasty glance around the apartment, replied that he had not been delayed, and Washington observing the glance, added that they were alone—although as he spoke the same peculiar and muffled sound seemed to enter the room and pervade it. "Dr. Franklin, I understood, was to come with you," he continued.

"He intended to, but was prevented at the last moment. I came with Captain Webb rather than wait, and Dr. Franklin will be here soon."

Washington bowed in response, and his visitor continued, first producing a packet of letters.

"I would like you to look over these papers at your leisure, General. They contain my instructions from the Count de Vergennes, with a letter also from the

King, Louis XVI. His Majesty is deeply interested in the commercial purport of my visit to this country. There is beside a personal note from Mr. Laurens, the president of your Congress, whom I have had the honor of meeting in Philadelphia."

"I can return them to you to-morrow," said Washington, looking casually over the papers and placing them in his desk. "Dr. Franklin writes that you have already traveled widely on your mission in the colonies."

"Yes, Monsieur. I am come from the southern colonies, and I go to Boston from here."

"The country is hardly seen to advantage now, but your journey was not, I hope, wholly unpleasant."

"My expectations have been more than realized by what I have seen and heard, and my letters home have stated this. To me it appears the opposition to English rule is everywhere evident among the people, and her support weak. Patriotism and independence of the old country seems to have infused all ranks, and your country, sir, is no less wonderful in its extent than its resources. No doubt is left in my mind, your Excellency, of the success of your cause."

"Your mission has not been suspected, Monsieur?"

"I have no reason to think it has, and I have been at great pains to insure the most perfect secrecy."

"You will find that we are watched and guarded with great jealousy, especially with reference to any correspondence with France."

"That I had occasion to learn even before I left France. But all my correspondence goes to Antwerp,



and is forwarded thence to Paris, where it is deciphered."

"You have observed that we are under many disadvantages—the lack of arms and ammunition, as well as of trained soldiers, to meet the great effort which England is now exerting to maintain her authority."

"She will do everything in her power, which is great, but, surely, after all that you have accomplished you will be able to meet such forces as England can send against you."

"All that she may send of her own."

"She is hiring soldiers of the Dutch, but that supply is limited. I need hardly tell you, Monsieur, that American agents are securing arms in France, and they will also find soldiers there, if need be."

"'Tis not so much the soldiers as the training that makes soldiers that we most need," replied Washington, his dark gray eyes resting upon his guest. "Do you believe, Monsieur, that your country is disposed to recognize these colonies as an independent nation?"

"I do not doubt, your Excellency, that France will recognize your independence, and she will aid you with ships and men when the time comes. You can hardly be aware, Monsieur, of the sympathy that we have for your cause in my country. I am not authorized to hold out such promise of aid or recognition. I am bound to say in that, I speak only for myself. But I can assure you of the great interest which the Count de Vergennes has in your movements, and that loans of money and arms are to be obtained by your Congress in France. I may say further, from my

latest advices, if England were to meet with another defeat to-morrow, I am sure it would be followed with the recognition of these colonies by France and by Spain."

"Such a recognition would go far to insure our success," said Washington after a brief pause, and adding, "unless, indeed, it were weighted with conditions."

"To what conditions, Monsieur, do you refer?"

"I have in mind the occupation of Canada by your country. The colonies, Monsieur Bonvouloir, would not, I am sure, consent to the purchase of their liberties on those terms."

"Your Excellency's suspicions may be natural, but they are unjust to my countrymen. They would not be entertained if you knew the enthusiasm among us for your noble efforts, here in a new world, in behalf of human liberty and the rights of man. Thousands of Frenchmen to-day, Monsieur, are eager to serve under your banners. They would place their lives and fortunes at your disposal. M. Beaumarchais is devoting all to your cause. I have one friend, to mention one only, the Count de la Fayette, young, rich, happily married to a loving and beautiful wife, he the only survivor of a family among the oldest and noblest in France, who wishes, at his own expense, to equip a ship, sail with it himself to America, and cast his fortunes with you. Do not, Monsieur, believe that France is actuated only by base and selfish motives of gain."

The sincerity of the speaker appeared in his earnestness, and helped to remove, as their discussion con-



tinued, any lingering suspicion that the American commander may have entertained. Washington's manner showed more trust and cordiality as the interview advanced to a closer mutual understanding.

"We recognize," he added presently, "that no overt act may be permitted between nations at peace, and that we have done little, as yet, to justify open support. That we shall be successful in the end I do not doubt, but I need not hesitate to repeat to you in confidence what I say in our own counsels. Many trials, and reverses, perhaps, are before us. We are strong in numbers but weak in experience, where England is powerful. She has the largest, best-drilled army in the world to-day to meet our inexperience. Do not misunderstand me. With all these advantages her success at this time may prove to her more serious than defeat—if we can learn from defeat. We would have our friends know, should misfortune come to us here in New York, that it does not mean our struggle has ended."

"I am sure of that, Monsieur," exclaimed the young man with fervor. "How can a cause in such hands come to naught? Will you permit me to make of you a personal request?"

"I am confident, Monsieur, you will not ask what would be difficult for me to grant."

"Not for your Excellency, but for me it will mean much. I wish to tender my services to this country when my mission has been discharged. May I ask your aid for an appointment in any capacity where one who has had military training and service can be use-

ful? I should say that I have the permission of the Count de Vergennes to join your army if I desire to do so."

A perceptible tremor in the voice of the speaker in making this request caused the older officer to regard him with a more personal interest.

"You will find war attended with greater hardships in this country than in Europe," he replied. "There will be less to gain from it—little glory, perhaps."

"I have no ambitions, not for glory, even," responded the young Frenchman gloomily.

"You have a family, wife, or children who should have consideration?"

"I have no one, General, who has claim upon me. None who will mourn for me as long as the suit of mourning will last. I want only a cause to devote myself and my fortune to—to fight and to die for. I find none in Europe. There all feeling is dead. All human sympathy is forgotten."

"My friend," returned Washington, "I can promise you every good office in my power if you continue in this mind. You are young, and there should be a happier prospect before you at home. Do not feel yourself bound to this request."

"General!" cried the younger man with suppressed excitement, "I shall not change. I am young. I have rank, wealth, a family name second to none in Europe, Monsieur. I am not M. Bonvouloir, the person who was to have taken this mission. When I come to you for service, it will be as the Marquis Armand, Count de la Rouerie. I first accepted this service



reluctantly, at the urgent request of my relative, the Count de Vergennes, who knew that it would occupy me. Now I have found something to live for. I ask no greater honor, sir, than to serve under you. No more glorious cause, sir, than the founding of that nation, which yours will be.

The emotional temperament of the Frenchman, despite his efforts of restraint, was beyond control. He rose and paced quickly up and down the apartment before recovering himself. Then he apologized for permitting his personal feelings to obtrude themselves, adding that it was not often that he so far forgot himself in such weakness.

At this moment a rapping at the main entrance interrupted him. Washington opened the door, admitting Dr. Franklin, who greeted him warmly, and repeated this to the Frenchman; but there was a disturbed expression in the usually unclouded and genial features of the philosopher and patriot.

"I thought it best to make my call openly, General," said he, "to avoid spies and inquisitive busybodies that are everywhere, but I expected to be here sooner."

"We have had an agreeable interview, I may say for myself. Monsieur Bonvouloir has told me to what good use he has put his visit to America."

"He has truly," replied Dr. Franklin. "What strange noise is that?" he added nervously, as the muffled and ominous sound again swept through the room. He turned another disturbed look on Washington. "Is there truth in these reports I hear? Do you think there was a plot afoot to assassinate you?"

"Not so bad as that. They proposed to treat me more considerately—to spirit me away bodily. No light task, with my weight of fifteen stone." He related what had been told by the Boston dispatch, and the steps already taken to anticipate the plot, adding: "There have been rumors the past week of some scheme afoot, but naught that we could trace. I doubt not but this, too, may be exaggerated, but it has given a clue to follow."

"Tryon would stop at naught," responded Dr. Franklin grimly. "Mighty well it would please him to carry you thus to England, and mightily please some others, to raise a scaffold for American rebels."

"You would not wish to figure in another Tower tragedy, Doctor?"

"I do not yearn for the distinction. But my old bones have well nigh done their stent, General. The candle is burning dim, and my little usefulness could be better spared at this time than you. You cannot be too careful when so much depends. Are you sure—ha! There is that confounded noise again! What!—"

The strange sound filled the room so palpably this time that it could no longer be ignored. It came directly from one of the open windows. Following it there was a perceptible movement behind the curtains, and, before anyone could reach them the figure of a man, forcing them apart, staggered across a chair, and fell with a crash to the floor, rolling over and clutching at the curtains.

Dr. Franklin sprang forward, interposing himself between Washington and the window. The French-



man with a leap stood over the prostrate form, his sword drawn to receive other intruders.

"Stay!" cried Washington, placing a firm hand on the arm of Monsieur de Bonvouloir. "Do him no harm. 'Tis the same Express who brought the Boston dispatches. Why are you here, sir?"

"You shall not have them, on my life!" exclaimed the Express, struggling to his feet with both hands clutching his breast.

"Well, sir?" repeated the Commander sternly, though his face broadened.

"Guess I fell asleep," muttered Hubbard, thickly, dazed by the light, and trying to collect his scattered thoughts and explain, but gaping widely and making poor work of it. "I'd like to go up with General Putnam's party."

"You had better be put to bed," recommended Dr. Franklin.

Washington, stepping to the door, called to Captain Webb, requesting him to accompany Hubbard over to Fraunce's Tavern, and Dr. Franklin added so pointedly that even the sleepy Express could not have failed to hear it as he left the room:

"I warrant, Monsieur Bonvouloir, you found large quantities of tobacco in Virginia, but the great difficulty will be in getting it shipped to France."

Captain Webb opened his eyes wide at seeing Hubbard come from the room.

"My dear boy," said he, "I have been hunting far and wide for you. Colonel Knox wants to see you,

and you are to report here at headquarters in the morning."

The Express heard rather than understood as he stumbled back to the Tavern, throwing himself half-dressed across the bed. There were uneasy dreams in which his Commander-in-chief and the French merchant figured—the merchant became strangely confused with the dark-bearded man of the East Chester tavern; and the form of Lady Claremont—all the incidents of the day—seemed to rise before him. Later the rumbling sounds coming from the attic indicated that the strange noises had been transferred from headquarters to the roof of Fraunce's Tavern.



CHAPTER VII.

A POOR CAPTAIN IN THE ARTILLERY.

Hubbard's room was among the rafters on the lower sweep of the long Dutch roof that capped the tavern. It looked down through the foliage of the buttonwood in front, upon the corner where the Express had executed his feat of horsemanship the previous evening. He still lay stretched in slumber the following day when the sun, having turned its course, shot its warm rays upon him from the window. Dreams troubled him no longer. The broad visage of Billy, the black servant, having looked in for the twentieth time since morning, he mustered resolution to arouse the sleeper.

The Express sprang to his feet with a quickened sense of time lost, and irretrievable. His toilette was made in short order. It was hastened on being told that an officer from Colonel Knox had twice inquired for him at the tavern, and had left word that he was not to be disturbed, but was to come to headquarters on awaking.

After a hasty refreshment he made his way thither with all speed, entering Bowling Green with such impetuosity as almost to run over Major Burr, who in great riding-boots, and spurs, dusty, weary, and irritable, greeted the offender:

"Is not the street wide enough, man alive!" looking even smaller than the day before, Hubbard thought—"Ah, Hubbard, 'tis you?" he smiled more pleasantly—"I might have known as much."

"Guess I was a little clumsy," smiled the quondam Express, contagiously.

"Don't mention it. I am in an ugly humor;" and the young Major waved his hand which made the gem on it sparkle.

"You seem to have been riding?"

"Not a wink of sleep since I saw you. Out all night scouring the rocks up the island to Kings Bridge—"

"To Kings Bridge?" cried Hubbard, eagerly, checking himself the same instant.

"Yes, a wild goose chase.—What do you know about it?"

"Abaout what?" asked the Bostonian.

"About the elephant from Hindostance, or the plot to kidnap Washington. The whole town's full of it." The Major fixed his black eye on Hubbard.

"I'm only just out of bed, you know. Was there a plot?"

"You're a Yankee for turning a question, Hubbard. Was there—I'm off to bed. I'll see you again soon;" he started away with a laugh.

At the Kennedy Mansion the guard was more strictly enforced than it had been the previous night. Groups of soldiers and citizens, gathered on the green, directed their looks frequently toward the house. A sentinel brought him to a peremptory halt—an imposing private of the Life Guard, in blue coat with



white facings, white waistcoat and breeches, blue half-gaiters, the whole surmounted by an ample blue-cocked hat and white plume.

With deference to so much military elegance the Express announced his name and mission modestly, which speedily brought forth instructions to admit him, and directed him in the wide hallway to an apartment opposite that occupied by the Commander-in-chief the previous evening.

The room was filled with soldiers, some of them conversing, and others busy at desks with clerical work. One officer came forward, calling Hubbard by name in a deep, hearty chest-voice. He recognized Colonel Harry Knox, sometime Boston bookseller and patriot, whose home had been a frequent resort of Harvard Sons of Liberty.

"I knew you last night, Hubbard," Colonel Knox said cordially "and meant to speak with you, but in the rush you slipped from sight."

Hubbard replied that he had not recognized Colonel Knox in uniform. He asked eagerly the outcome of the night's expedition. The officer replied in an undertone that there had been no trace of the enemy. He added that the bottom had been surely knocked out of the conspiracy, and one of the prisoners stood ready to confess everything. He cautioned Hubbard to say nothing of the matter, and then calling to the wiry, dark-haired Commissary:

"Colonel Trumbull, here is the new recruit whom I said I would vouch for."

"When will you report for duty?" asked Colonel

Trumbull, promptly surveying Hubbard from a desk piled with papers, and surrounded with officers.

"Guess I'm as ready now as I will be," replied the Express, not more strongly impressed than he had been the previous night.

"You want a uniform. Report in the morning and we'll fix it."

The Commissary had no more time for recruits, but renewed his attention to his papers and the officers. Colonel Knox called to Hubbard from the other side of the room. He stood with a fair, boyish looking officer—more youthful at sight even than the Express—of smaller and sligher figure, with a high, white forehead under light, wavy hair, and a face animated and responsive, as he greeted Hubbard, on Colonel Knox's presentation, with a warm hand pressure.

"I want you to know Captain Alexander Hamilton of the artillery, Hubbard. I've told him of you, and you will be friends, I think. He can help you if you want anything. He knows this town of York as well as you know Boston. Now, I must let Mrs. Knox know that she has a husband. I have not yet been home to-day."

Left to themselves the interchange of experiences, which comes easily before twenty, soon established an understanding between the young men. They passed out from headquarters through the formidable palisades of Fort George, opposite, walking along the water front that bristled with batteries. A native wit in the Boston recruit quickened his country training. His limitations were offset by a quick discernment of



merit in others; but he was at loss whether to admire most in his new friend—who was slightly his senior in years—that ready enthusiasm which was one of his own qualities, or the equal readiness, clearness, and extent of his convictions on all topics. Hamilton, though not of American birth, had lived for several years in New York, was an ardent advocate of the colonial cause, and confident of its triumph.

"We shall whip the British, you know," said he, sanguinely.

Hubbard was also of that opinion.

"Their only chance," continued the artillery captain, "is to capture our army, or to annihilate it, and neither alternative is probable. In consequence, after the next battle, we shall obtain the recognition of Europe as belligerents, which will practically end the war."

Hubbard drew a long breath at this summary disposition of events. He admitted a hope for a little actual fighting, having missed all of it around Boston.

"Oh, I doubt not, Friend Hubbard," granted Hamilton, "there will be fighting enow for a year or more—a chance for all of us, for the which I shall myself be quite grateful. 'Tis a war, you know, that breaks up old social crusts and gives new conditions, and new men and their ideas a chance. To my own thinking, if the war were to last longer 'twould prove a benefit, in view of what may come after."

"What is it that may come after?" asked the Boston recruit.

"It will depend, to be sure," reflected this political philosopher. "Probably a general break-up of this large colonial family. 'Tis not so easy to say for a certainty what a new country like ours will do, You have noted jealousies—disagreements are according to all history. Peradventure, next will be a monarchy, or several of them to start, which may unite into one or two, and form an empire."

"But we are pretty much of one race of English stock," observed his companion.

"True, which is another uncertainty. Well, surely it will be a great country, don't you think? Look around us, Hubbard! This Bay, is it not a rare, green chalice—brimful, sparkling with promise, and running over to the sea for the world to share? Is it not a glorious country to live or die for? To build, for the future, a nation and a home?"

The tide raced around the island point, the waves surging and shattering gently on the rocks at their feet. Fertile, green hills rolled up in swelling outlines about the margin of the broad basin, and fleecy clouds were piled in masses on the Jersey highlands to receive the declining sun. Sea gulls hovered and fell upon the tossing waves, and overhead an eagle circled in graceful curves, wings widespread and motionless. Hubbard, in a less poetic frame of mind, broke the reverie.

"You are of the artillery, Hamilton?"

"Yes," returned the officer, in a long-drawn breath, so like a sigh that his friend looked inquiringly. "I am but a poor captain in the artillery."

"But you have already a command?"



“ ‘Yes,’ returned the officer, ‘I am but a poor captain in the artillery.’ ” *Page 74.*



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"We have several guns. I have been studying military practice, strategy and tactics the year past."

"You've a great start, and I have only begun," responded Hubbard, regretfully.

"What training will do we shall show, and a single fight will be worth a dozen years of practice. I am two years older than you, though I scarce look it; but that will count little for me in the long run."

Hamilton's tone seemed to become more despondent.

"You have the greater vantages; you are tall and will be large, which means much." Another sigh escaped the artillery captain, whose late assurance appeared to have deserted him.

"I don't clearly understand you," said his companion, perplexed by the contrast.

"Ah, my friend, do you not see how hard it will be for a little fellow like me to push a way through a crowd—all large men, stalwart warriors? If I were older and larger the chances would be better. I have neither money nor possessions as you have, which give one a hearing. Were the war to end to-morrow, Friend Hubbard, I should be as worthless as the Continental currency."

"And it will have its full value in due time, Hamilton. You don't allow for skill and brains. In these days they will count for muscle and big bones."

"But the bones are good to have. The brains are of little use if you have no chance to use them. If you met a woman you loved you could not marry on brains. You could build a house with muscle, but you could not turn your brains into bread when there was no

demand for them. If she were rich it would be no better, for she would tire of waiting for you."

"Is that the way the wind blows? Cheer up, Hamilton! It will always change. The war's not yet over, nor the chances for glory, fortune, and love."

"'Tis evident, Hubbard, that you have never been in love."

"Not I, that's very true—nor care to be."

"You'd not talk so, had you been; if you knew a woman as sweet as the breath of June—a poem as beautiful as the picture around us." He sighed again, deeply: "If you knew and loved her; knew that you could be nothing to her, because you had nothing, and were nothing—"

"Too many negatives, Hamilton. If she were worth anything, she would wait."

"How can a poor artillery captain ask her to wait, and she an heiress?"

"Oh, she is an heiress!" and the referee who had never been in love meditated gravely. "Does she care for you?"

"How can I say? I have not seen her more than half a dozen times."

Hubbard felt that the problem was becoming extremely complicated.

"Yesterday she passed in the Murray coach—they were driving out to Murray Hill about this same hour."

"In the Murray coach?" repeated his companion, with increased interest. "She lives in town, then?"



"She is visiting Miss Murray, but her home is up-State, where she may return at any time, or form an attachment before leaving here. At best my chances of seeing her again, even, are small. General Schuyler is likely to stay north."

"It is Miss Schuyler—I think, perhaps, I know her."

"You know her?" cried Hamilton, regarding him with wonder.

"That is to say, I have met her," replied Hubbard, relating the incident of the Murray coach, of which he had already made some inquiry. Hamilton followed him with breathless interest, indicating the identity of each of the ladies. Miss Murray and Miss Wyncoop were intimate friends of Miss Schuyler—the fourth was the Lady Claremont.

"Who is the Lady Claremont?" asked Hubbard.

Hamilton knew only that her husband, an invalid, or dead, was much older than she, and had lived in New York. He came of an old and titled English family. She, he thought, was of English affiliation, but much esteemed in town. She had only recently returned to this country to look after a fine property up the island on the Hudson.

All of which greatly interested the Express, who felt a growing Yankee concern in the remarkable personality of Lady Claremont.

"His family are the Courtneys," Hamilton added. "'Tis said they trace it back through the royal blood of Europe to the Cæsars, though I have heard that he is none the better for it, and was a reckless rake. Her family name was Mary Gibbon, and a kinsman

of hers, 'tis said, a member of Parliament, has just writ a history of the declining of ancient Rome, that makes more stir abroad than these colonies."

The artillery officer returned directly to that topic of most interest to himself which he would not permit long to be diverted. The tender confidences formed a stronger tie between them, but the subject was becoming exhausted to Hubbard, when, expressing a desire to purchase a suitable uniform for the service, his friend offered to accompany him to a reliable shop.

They turned presently into Queen Street, now become Pearl Street, which curved in a half moon around the lower part of the island. On it then were the large shops, mostly on the first floors, with dwellings or storerooms above—low, two-story bricks, chiefly, with Dutch façades, as if for a double flight of steps for one to climb for a survey of the street.

Many people were passing on the narrow sidewalks, but few were in the shops. One of these inscribed with the name of Jacobus Van Dam, Hamilton entered, followed by Hubbard, whose taller figure made the space seem contracted. A lean, elderly little man with spectacles resting on the top of his bald head, awaited their approach, seated in his arm chair, and scanning them deliberately.

"Master Van Dam," said Hamilton, "my friend, Mr. Jonathan Hubbard, of Boston, who is just appointed on Colonel Trumbull's staff, wishes an outfit. I have recommended you as the most reliable and reasonable dealer."



"I thank Captain Hamilton for his wery good services," responded the proprietor, bowing graciously, as one who can grant a favor, but without rising. "I esteem it the more as your clerical training, Master—I should say, Captain Hamilton—permits you to speak with knowledge of the commercial standing of New York merchants. What style of uniform will you have sir, a plain suit, or one of—better quality?"

"Something good and respectable, Master Van Dam."

"Ah, yes. You will be an officer in the Commissary?"

"This is my own purchase," replied Hubbard, "for which I will pay down in good English guineas."

"That is a wery different matter, young gentlemens," exclaimed the merchant with alacrity, measuring at a glance the proportions of his customer. "We are wery cautious in these times—wery cautious, young gentlemens."

He added that he had by chance an outfit that would just fit Hubbard, and he produced a uniform of bright, sky-blue cloth, the coat lapels faced with crimson silk, breeches and hose to match, a buff-waistcoat, and three-cornered cocked hat—one of a lot, he explained, finished for the Grenadiers a week since, but this particular grenadier, having taken sick and died, had no more use for it.

"Such a uniform is wery rare," said Jacobus Van Dam, holding it to the light. "It is of fine French nap, and you are wery lucky to come in now to get this suit, which will fit you with wery few changes."

Hubbard was visibly impressed. The outfit was even more effective when he had it tried on, with a ruffled shirt-front as a background. Captain Hamilton also pronounced favorably. Master Van Dam promised that the alterations should be made that night, and the uniform delivered early the next morning. These considerations settled, and the customer's Yankee thrift satisfied by a liberal reduction, in virtue of a cash payment, Hubbard counted out the price, which went clinking, presently, into the merchant's strong box.

Hamilton then led the way to the foot of Maiden Lane, near Fly Market, where Hubbard purchased of Bruff, the maker, a sword of finely tempered steel, warranted. It was mounted with a lion's head handle, and attached by a sash of green, corded silk and a silver buckle to the waist. With these accoutrements the possessor began to feel that he had in reality entered upon a soldier's career. He pressed upon Hamilton to eat dinner with him at the tavern, but his friend's military duties preventing, they parted with mutual expressions of regard, and with an agreement that Hubbard was to lodge at the Kennedy House, where there was a cot vacant in Hamilton's room.

Jacobus Van Dam, being as good as his word, the uniform was delivered promptly the next morning, enabling the owner to appear in it forthwith. This was accomplished with some exertion and forbearance on the part of the wearer, and the aid of Billy, as the new outfit was of closer fit than the looser garments to which Hubbard had been accustomed in civil life. Billy indulged in extravagant raptures over the



transformation. The only drawback was Hubbard's hair, its native pompadour tendencies refusing absolutely to submit to any ribbon or bagwig processes. This was indeed but a trifle to the Yankee recruit—one of those trifles which he had a pleasant habit of throwing behind him with a toss of the head, signifying that it no longer gave him concern.



CHAPTER VIII.

THE RECRUIT ENTERS SERVICE.

In the sky-blue uniform, with polished metal buttons as large as the palm of the hand, ruffled shirt-front, cocked hat and lion-headed sword, the Boston Express would hardly have been recognized in the dashing soldier who crossed Bowling Green from Fraunce's Tavern. There were others on Broad Way Street in quite as brilliant and even gayer colors, so that his appearance was not exceptional. Colonel Trumbull, occupied as he had been the day before, looked up from the stack of books and papers, taking in the uniform of the new recruit, which was in strong contrast with his own unpretentious garments.

"Ye're rigged out to beat the band or the Grenadiers," he observed.

Hubbard replied, that to be prepared he had bought the outfit on his own responsibility.

"Bought it yourself, eh!" returned his superior officer with a sniff and a marked Connecticut interrogation. "What might it cost ye?"

Hubbard rendered the desired information.

"Humph!" the Colonel muttered drily, with something else that sounded like a fool and his money, which passed in air over Hubbard's head. "General



Washington would a-told ye that a plain hunting suit would a-been more fitting for actual service. Here are some orders you can take up to Richmond Hill. Tell Captain Webb I want them back, right off."

He handed over the package without further information, and Hubbard, accustomed to rely on his own resources, ascertained by discreet inquiry the direction and the location of Richmond Hill. Following a narrow lane from King's College he reached the more traveled Green'ich Road that led a mile up the country to Washington's quarters.

The Richmond Hill house was a large suburban residence with double porch in front, occupying an eminence in spacious grounds, and in the midst of a fine grove. The Commander-in-chief was absent with his staff inspecting a new Star-battery under construction on Bayard Hill, but Hubbard met with a hearty reception from Captain Webb. Webb was large and round of limb, ruddy-cheeked, broad-shouldered, and with a bounding temperament that chafed in the clerical duties of his position.

"My dear boy," he confided to Hubbard between puffs from his pipe, "infernally glad to see somebody. Penned up here with letters and orders since daybreak. The General's such a devilish early riser, you know, and wants everybody else up. Oh, Gad! more of them?" he groaned as Hubbard handed him the packet. "I shall be on the sick list if this thing don't let up. You don't want an answer?"

Hubbard replied that he would take a turn around the grounds meanwhile. The secretary settled down

to his task with a sigh of resignation, calling first in a stage whisper—with a backward jerk of the head toward the corner of the house—an intimation that there was a jolly bit of petticoat somewhere in that direction with which Hubbard was to play no tricks. This sagacious advice was lost on the Yankee recruit, whose mind was filled with war and kindred topics, among which no tender thoughts of petticoats had place.

Around the corner of the house he stood beneath the limbs of a broad-domed oak, looking beyond over a pretty, rolling country. It rose to the north, dotted with country homes and farm houses, through which the Green'ich Road wound until it was lost amid the woods and hills. Back toward town by the way he came was the low ground of the Lispenard Meadows, over which three black crows were lazily flapping their wings, and to the west of the road, shining like snow beside the green fields, a wide, white beach sloped down to the broad Hudson.

A delicate and slight little cough first directed his attention from this pleasant prospect to the immediate surroundings. The cough came from a demure little woman seated close at hand, at the foot of the oak, her lap filled with flax-tow, a large pile of which was heaped beside her. Her cheeks were touched with rich and healthful color;—her bright eyes, fixed modestly on the work in her lap, might easily have noted through the long, black lashes the effect of her interruption on the intruder.

Hubbard, though startled, was less embarrassed

than a more susceptible youth would have been. The young woman, as she sat intent on the preparation of the lint, seemed scarcely more than a child. He excused himself without showing a disposition to move away, but with a naïve comment on her task that brought a smile to the pretty lips, a flash from the bright eyes and a quick turn of attention to her work.

"You have a pretty big stent this morning," observed the soldier.

"Yes," returned the demure maid with a sigh; "but Lady Washington tells us the poor soldiers will need all the lint we can prepare."

"Your little fingers will get sore if you work so hard all the time."

"Lady Washington says that idle fingers soon get into mischief."

"Is it Lady Washington who sets this task for you?"

"We all have our tasks since the war has come;" another sigh—"Have you been in the war?" turning the question.

Hubbard admitted reluctantly that he had not yet been actively engaged.

"I thought you had not, with such a handsome uniform."

"Guess I do look about as purty as a Chinee rooster," the soldier admitted with a good-humored blush, at which she also smiled.

"Are you an American?" she asked, and to his affirmative, "I thought you must be. I am Margaret Moncrieffe. My father is Colonel Moncrieffe of the British army. General Washington expects to ex-

change me for one of his officers. You are not a colonel, are you?"

Again Hubbard was bound to respond in the negative.

"You must be a major, then? No, not even a major? Do you know any colonels or majors in your army?" queried the maid with an upward glance.

Hubbard had a few colonels and majors in the circle of his acquaintance.

"Tell me some of them," she asked, persuasively.

"There is Colonel Knox."

"Yes, he is often here."

"And—there is Colonel Morgan, who has just gone south."

"I don't care for him—he's so big and rough. Who else?"

"Well, there is Major Burr—What's the matter?"

The work dropped from her lap and her bright eyes turned full upon him.

"You really know Major Burr? I thought perhaps you might."

"He is a particular friend of mine," replied Hubbard.

"I am so glad!" She sprang to her feet, a flush on her face. He could not fail to note her graceful figure and pretty features; but she was not the slip of a child he had inferred, though her head barely reached the level of his heart. "Will you take him a message from me?" she asked in a low voice.

He assured her that it would be a pleasure and



laughed cheerfully as she looked into his face to satisfy herself that he was trustworthy.

"I will write it in a moment," she cried, bounding away into the house.

The young recruit puckered his lips in a low whistle.

"Here's another," he thought. "Burr, like Hamilton, has a silk string fastened to him. I wonder if that's part of the service?"

He was still cogitating when the young woman returned, thrusting a little note into his hand and, quickly seating herself, picking up the lint, while she asked earnestly, her eyes fixed on the work:

"You will give it to Major Burr very soon, won't you, and speak to no one of it?"

He vowed secrecy, and she added that she only wanted to tell Major Burr of a "Sociable," that was to be held the coming Thursday, a fortnight at the Walton House. It would be a very great favor, indeed, if he could deliver the note soon. He promised again, and returned to Captain Webb, who had ready the papers, with which Hubbard set forth at once, delivering them to Colonel Trumbull promptly.

"Waal?" said that officer, sharply. "Couldn't find the place?"

The new recruit held out the orders signed, at which his superior sniffed audibly, as he glanced over them, and, when Hubbard had begun to think his existence forgotten: "All right," resumed Colonel Trumbull. "I'll want you to see Captain Tupper to-morrow and get boats to bring over supplies from Jarsey. Have yourself ready. Where are you staying?"

Hubbard explained that he had made arrangements for quarters with Captain Hamilton, and that he wanted to bring over his effects from Fraunce's Tavern. This being satisfactory to the Commissary, he started at once for the tavern, where he hoped also to find trace of Major Burr, and deliver the important message which he carried for him.



CHAPTER IX.

TREATS OF THE LITTLE PURITAN COUSIN.

A few moments sufficed for Hubbard to gather up his effects in the tavern. He was settling the score when the Chevalier Conway entered the public room, pacing the sanded floor with military stride and knitted brows, indicative of no pleasing humor. Conway was attired with the same elegance—though in a different suit—that the Express had first admired in his person, but his preoccupation, as well as Hubbard's transformation, prevented his recognition at first. Hubbard was about to ask him of Major Burr, when Conway, after a closer survey, identified the Express, and congratulated him on entering the service, as he inferred from the uniform.

"You are a lucky dog," he continued, commending the equipment, which commendation from so distinguished a connoisseur caused the recruit to color with pleasure. "'Tis a month since I landed in that same town of Boston, and my own wardrobe is still there, with small chance of getting it. I did not think such uniforms as yours were to be had in Boston."

Hubbard, in his new suit, had a profound sympathy for a brother soldier in affliction, and for such cause. Albeit he wondered how many additional suits

Conway might have in that wardrobe, and that officer did not intimate, for reasons of his own, doubtless, that this delay was due to certain extravagances during his brief stay in the aforesaid town.

In his warmth of heart Hubbard tendered his own Boston acquaintance to aid in the speedy transmission of these effects. The Chevalier Conway replied that if he were in France instead of New York the embarrassment would be trifling, but in this blooming country everything grew wild except one's credit. A sack of paper money would not replace his wardrobe; if, however, the recruit could accommodate him with a small matter of £50 or so, it would come like a fall of manna to the chosen people.

So frank a request was unexpected. But the Boston recruit, with a rapid Yankee calculation, felt that he could afford to place a portion of the amount at least with such eminent security, on which Conway, who appeared equally, but agreeably surprised, proclaimed him a jewel, the first he had as yet discovered in the country.

All gloom and perplexity cleared from his brow, but his deliverer was again staggered, a few moments later, when the Chevalier proposed to break a bottle of Black Sam's best vintage, and, as he disliked to remain under obligations, to try a toss of dice for the loan, affording him a chance to win it honorably, or for Hubbard to hold him in double the sum. The entrance of Major Burr at this juncture relieved the recruit of the dilemma, which indeed conflicted with his New



England scruples, and Conway did not again revert to the proposal.

"Ah, Hubbard, you are a keen one," exclaimed Burr, taking in the uniform at a glance. "Would you believe, Chevalier, we were entertaining a prince the other night who came down the street as an Express?"

"I told you that I would be surprised at nothing."

"But who would have thought this same Express was to set the town agog!"

"What do you mean?" asked Conway, interested.

"'Twas he that brought from Boston the word of Tryon's plot in the Guard—but for him the army might have waked in the morning without a head."

"Ah," said Conway, in surprise, "but it might have survived decapitation."

"That's an opinion," replied Burr. "I congratulate you, Hubbard. 'Tis easy to see that you now have friends in Court. Do you go on the general staff?"

Hubbard modestly stated his appointment as an aide to Colonel Trumbull, adding that he was to make his quarters at the Kennedy House with Captain Hamilton.

"Not so bad," said Major Burr. "With that little West Indian, did you say?"

"Is he a West Indian?" asked Hubbard. Burr spoke of Hamilton as a kind of pigmy, though himself of no larger stature.

"Something of the sort; a collegian of the Sons of Liberty they call him, too. He will get on, this Hamilton; he is clever—he has a long nose."

"An' it comes to long noses," says Hubbard, "there are many of us," at which Major Burr smiled.

"They tell a good story of him," he continued. "You remember the little captain in the artillery I pointed out to you the other day, Chevalier? A party of Liberty Boys went down to the College last week to pay their respects to Dr. Knox, the president. He had been expressing his British sympathies too freely, and they proposed to give the old gentleman a treat. On the steps outside Hamilton met them and protested so strongly for the Doctor that he checked them, when the Doctor himself thrust his head out of the window. He's as deaf as a post, you know, and couldn't hear a word they were saying—but he shouted at the top of his voice: 'Don't you mind what that little fool Hamilton says! Don't you mind him! He doesn't know what he is talking about—'"

A party of ladies on horse swept past the tavern, to whom Major Burr and his friends raised their hats from the tavern porch, receiving a general recognition from the cavalcade. All of which imparted a thrill of pleasure to Hubbard, who identified his four acquaintances of the Murray coach.

"What birds of paradise are those?" inquired Conway.

"Miss Murray and her friends, from Murray Hill," responded Burr. "I passed them in front of headquarters a few moments since in conference with General Washington. I did not suppose he could be so gracious as he appeared to them."



"Who is she in the dark habit?" inquired Conway with particular interest, it seemed to Hubbard.

"She is the Lady Claremont, just returned from Boston, who is adjusting her husband's affairs in the colonies."

"Claremont?" repeated Conway, his eyes still following the party; "I would have sworn that but one woman could ride with such grace and carriage."

"Chevalier," said Major Burr, "here's your opportunity. A fine estate goes with either of these ladies to the lucky man whose name she chooses."

"Unless the estates of the pretty rebels revert to King George."

"'Tis worth the risk. Miss Schuyler is the daughter of General Schuyler, who owns the whole north part of the State."

"Major Burr," said Conway, recovering from a reverie and taking a fresh cigar, "my opinion of you as an officer of brilliant parts weakens."

"I am sorry, Chevalier. On what grounds, may I ask?"

"That you should have given up your chances in Washington's military family."

"Too much of the family, thank you," said Burr, with a shrug of the shoulders.

"And of Burr, too—and of a lady in the family?" Conway smiled.

"I do not know of one. Was there one?"

"Youthful innocence, a trifle overdone, my boy. I mind me of a saucy little Moncrieffe, and your friend

on the pillion, the other night, crossing Kissing Bridge."

"Ah, you saw us." Burr passed off this with a laugh. "You are out this time, Chevalier. My friend was a little Puritan cousin, stopping a few days at the Beckman House—near the Bridge, you know. You see, my family, the Edwards, on my mother's side, come of old Puritan stock."

All of which was so natural, that had not Hubbard held the end of the clue he must have been convinced, though a bright red spot still burned on either cheek of the young major.

"Circumstantial, begad," said Conway. "Does the little Puritan cousin wear pretty gems like that on your finger? Never mind, my boy—but keep 'em turned in."

Conway excused himself presently, having an appointment, and Burr, being a little flushed, complained of the heat. He proposed that they walk up the Broad Way Street, where there was always air stirring.

They turned into that broad thoroughfare, on which the dwellings, larger than common, sat back from the street in ample grounds, giving still greater breadth to the avenue. A row of beeches and maples made a leafy canopy, under which the balmy southern sea breezes sent a refreshing circulation, though the day was warm and near the noon hour. The street was thronged with soldiers and citizens, among whom Major Burr appeared to have unlimited acquaintance. At every step he was greeted, always with great cour-



tesy and respect, and Hubbard noted with how much tact and self-possession he avoided direct invitations to linger.

The Boston recruit felt a strong attraction toward this young officer, whose presence imparted a pleasant and stimulating influence. He was sensibly flattered when Burr thrust an arm cordially—if with a touch of patronage—through that of his taller companion in the sky-blue uniform, as they sauntered leisurely up the street.

Major Burr was a most promising and conspicuous young man of the town in those days. Barely twenty, he stood in high favor with the best Presbyterian families, as the son of the late scholarly president of Princeton—and a touch of romance and adventure was then already associated with his career. He had entered the army at the outbreak of the war, served with credit through the Boston siege, and afterward, at great personal risk and much gallantry, carried through communications to General Montgomery, on his dangerous expedition to Quebec. On this mission he had been obliged to secure safety in the protection of a Catholic priest, and subsequently to assume the disguise of a priest. He reached Montgomery, whom he served as a confidential aide, and it was into the arms of Major Burr that the unfortunate General had fallen, mortally wounded.

Burr had escaped capture in time to return and share the popular sympathy for Montgomery's untimely death. Washington had tendered him a place on his staff, that Burr accepted, but presently resigned, the

duties being less to his liking than more active service. He was now attached to the staff of General Putnam.

As the two friends passed along the enclosure beside which stood Trinity in a fine grove of primitive trees, separated from the street by a high, painted, wooden picket, Burr in a youthful outburst of confidence, observed:

"Hubbard, do you know I have taken a great liking to you?" At which his friend expressed appreciation, smiling inwardly at thought of the epistle he carried, as calculated to strengthen these ties.

"That Conway is a curious genius," Burr continued shortly. "He seemed somewhat abstracted this morning. And he was entirely out in that matter of my little cousin, you know?"

He looked up at his tall friend, who simply nodded his head, and Burr continued:

"Conway has a high military reputation abroad, and has seen much service, but he doesn't seem to take at headquarters. He will be heard from, though, I warrant, if there's any chance. But I warn you—"

"What about?" asked Hubbard, as Burr paused.

"He's a sponge, and if you have spare ducats best keep them from his sight. He'll attract them and you will never see them more."

"You mean he doesn't pay his debts?" said Hubbard, thinking of his recent loan.

"A word to the wise, you know—I like him. We have so few real soldiers—the more pity—since Montgomery is gone. Ah, there was a military genius for



you, who would have driven out the British in quick time!"

"Don't you think that Washington will be able to?"

"Oh, he will do very well, I dare say, with experience and opportunity."

"But he has had experience, and he is a patriot, serving not for money."

"Yes, he is honest, and not ambitious, 'tis said, but all have their weak spots. They do say that Washington has none, which is a pity. He has a fortune, so that money will not touch him. If he were not so cold and formal, women might;—but there's no telling. 'Tis three times this past week, I would swear, I have seen Miss Murray and her friends at headquarters."

"He would surely have more to gain of England than from the colonies."

"That's to be seen. He may become a Lord Protector, a Cromwell, or a George the First of America. But he has had no thorough military training like Montgomery or Lee—and generals are not made in a day. He was but a surveyor with no education, nor imagination that I can see. I doubt if he ever read a book of tactics, or of poetry. He has the trade to learn."

Burr was evidently not in sympathy with the Commander-in-chief, and in a fitful humor himself. From St. Paul's they turned into the Common, as a rugged, trimly dressed officer, on horse, dashed past, returning Burr's salute brusquely. Hubbard, also slightly depressed at his companion's moodiness, still maintained his confidence in the colonial cause and its leaders, for-

getting for the moment his other mission for Major Burr.

"We shall probably win," his friend continued, "if we don't blunder, and no one plays us double."

"I hope to see some fighting before the war's through," said the recruit.

"Fighting's well enough, and I have had some of it," replied this veteran; "but it's a butcher's trade after all, Hubbard. I'll be glad to get out of it. If I could see my way clear to a couple of years at the law, I'd get quit of it quick. I am deathly sick and tired of a business where only bull-force wins."

"But you think it takes genius to make a great soldier?"

"So it does when there are conditions. What can you expect when auctioneers, blacksmiths and cattle drivers are the leaders? Where are the honors? That was Colonel Anthony Wayne that just passed us, a Pennsylvania fighting cock, much in favor. Ben Arnold's another, and a fine scamp at that. They will take all the prizes, and we small fry can throw up our caps and shout."

Hubbard was reminded of a like depression of spirits on the part of his friend Hamilton, and with it his thoughts returned to the note in his pocket. He added: "We have brains as well, Burr—in Franklin, Jefferson, and Adams."

"True enough, and what's a military reputation beside Franklin's!—You saw the doctor wink at that Frenchman the other night? I wonder what sly game's afoot! I tell you, Hubbard, an' I get out this next



fight sound, I'll throw up my chances in the army and take a pen. I want a hand in the moves, and I'll not be a chess pawn for a lot of back-country butchers."

Burr threw himself recklessly on the grass in the shade of a great elm, digging his heels into the ground fiercely, and looking gloomy and discontented. His friend, regarding him in silence, observed absently:

"I was up at Richmond Hill this morning with papers for General Washington."

Major Burr sat upright, but relapsed at once, and Hubbard resumed presently:

"I looked abaout while Webb was writing an answer, and there was a young woman—"

"The devil, Hubbard! Did you see her?"

"Her—the devil is a he! Who—"

"There's only one! Miss Moncrieffe, a little, black-eyed gazelle!"

"The little Puritan cousin?"

"Drat the Puritan cousin!" Burr blushed violently. "If I had only known you were going I would have given you a note."

"Why don't you go yourself?"

"Oh, I am warned off the premises. We had an appointment night before last when I was sent out scouring those Kings Bridge hills. There's no telling when I can reach her now," and he settled back disconsolately.

"I was about to say that she asked me"—resumed Hubbard, when Burr sprang to his feet and seized him.

"Did she send me word? I'll swear eternal friendship if she did, Hubbard."

"She asked me to deliver this note—"

Burr seized it and devoured its contents. His face, no longer morose, was glowing.

"Is she a Puritan gazelle?" grinned Hubbard.

"Hit hard, my boy—I don't mind," replied he gaily, and grasping his tall companion by the arm they whirled around the elm tree trunk in the full joy of youth and living.

"What is the Walton House Sociable?" inquired Hubbard, when they rested.

His friend explained that it was a kind of open-air entertainment being organized by the ladies, to be given in the grounds of the Walton House for the benefit of the army.

"Lady Washington," he added, "has charge of Miss Moncrieffe, and I am no favorite of hers. She would like to send her charge to a convent, I think, in place of which she keeps her picking flax-tow. Gad, Hubbard, if ever you have the smallpox, send for me!"

The friends parted in high spirits, Hubbard quite sure that Major Burr had relinquished any present intention of quitting the army for the study of law.

This Walton House Sociable he, also, might contrive to attend. Perhaps it would give him another chance of meeting that mysterious Lady Claremont, whom he had not forgotten; her friend, also, he of the dark beard at the East Chester Tavern—undoubtedly, from his bearing, a soldier of high rank—whom, strangely enough, Hubbard had not yet caught a



glimpse of, but whose grasp on the collar he still resented. Had not the Chevalier Conway shown a sign of recognition when Lady Claremont and her friends rode past that morning, as if he knew her, though his words belied that fact? Her associations all seemed curiously shrouded in some unaccountable maze that attracted him.

Hubbard did not fail to ponder over these extreme transitions of temperament, from a similar cause, which he had now observed in two of his new acquaintances, within so brief an interval. But he smiled to himself at the humor of it, with his toss of the head throwing it aside, as among the curious manifestations whose philosophy, while it puzzled, did not otherwise concern him.



CHAPTER X.

THE RECRUIT SECURES HIS COMMISSION.

The Tryon Plot made a great ado, not only in the warlike town of New York, but through the country, where reports of the discovery of the conspiracy spread wildfire. British sympathizers found it becoming, thereafter, to suppress their sentiments, when Sons of Liberty, on all sides, needed but slight occasion to kindle their zeal. And Governor Tryon, in his warship, "Duchess of Gordon," off Spuyten Duyvil, became conscious of the storm he had raised, and, to avoid possible collision with the infernal machines which General Putnam and his Connecticut Yankees might hatch, did presently draw anchor, and seek the deeper waters of the bay.

Congress, which was becoming a power in the land, appointed a Commission to investigate, with authority to arrest and punish all conspirators. This Commission entering on its duties forthwith, arrests followed fast, and the jail on the Common was soon filled.

One of the conspirators made full confession, and Sergeant Hickey of the Life Guard, being found a leader in the plot, was tried, convicted, and in a few days publicly hanged. Matthews, the ex-mayor of the



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town, barely escaped a like fate. But no trace was found of Gil Forbes, the man in the fuzzy, yellow suit. It was presumed that he gave alarm to the band of Tories on Fordham Heights, as they had disappeared the next day when a troop of Virginia dragoons explored the neighborhood.

One of the chief witnesses before the Congressional Commission was Jonathan Hubbard. Without having anything further to reveal, he recited the circumstances of his ride from Boston so effectively—and this received further corroboration and commendation from the Commander-in-chief—and, in his new uniform, in which the Express appeared before the Commission, he impressed that body so favorably that he was dismissed with high compliments. But it did not end in compliments. His appointment on the staff of Colonel Trumbull was approved by official resolution, and a commission as lieutenant was recommended the said Jonathan Hubbard in recognition of his laudable and patriotic zeal in the service of his country.

"Did I not say you would get on?" congratulated his friend, Captain Alexander Hamilton of the artillery. "Here are you in town scarce a fortnight, and already become an aide on the Commissary staff, and a lieutenancy made for you. If the war holds many months, Hubbard, you will surely be a general."

"Then I shall be able to help some of my friends," replied Hubbard, in full spirits, at once pinning a cockade to his hat, accepting rank and title. But though highly flattered Jonathan's head was not turned at the favor of fortune, which he regarded fully earned,

and well deserved. It may have been observed that the Express was of an open and irrepressible temperament, blended with a natural sagacity and quickness that adapts itself to conditions. He was troubled neither with excessive vanity nor undue modesty at this sanguine and buoyant epoch of youth, and he accepted the gifts that the gods tendered as his just deserts, wasting no lamentations or regrets, as yet, for what did not come to him.

He celebrated his good fortune with a dinner at Fraunce's Tavern, inviting his friends, Hamilton and Burr and the Chevalier Conway, who enlivened the occasion with interesting anecdote, and toasted the new lieutenant in glowing terms. The event made a further depletion in his ready funds, but having now entered upon that long cherished career, such a matter gave him no concern, but was dismissed, after his custom, and placed behind him and out of sight.

"Hubbard," observed Colonel Trumbull, scrutinizing him closely one morning, "guess you'd better go over to the Walton House Thursday, where the ladies are getting up a fandango."

The Lieutenant expressed his readiness to obey orders, and waited, his superior seeming to have special instructions pending.

"I've not time to rig up, and you've got a putty new uniform. It's a poor family without one gentleman in it;" he continued to scrutinize his aide, somewhat abstractedly, and added: "Speak to me in the morning about it. I'll have other instructions."



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Hubbard was more delighted than he gave evidence of to his chief, as the "Sociable" had become a much talked of topic within a few days, and invitations, which had been extended prominent officers and citizens, were widely sought for.

For the month past the ladies of the officers' families, including the wife of the Commander-in-chief, had been occupied with many projects, to relieve and turn to use the routine of camp life. The opportunities for recreation in town were not wide or varied at best. There was a little theatre on John Street—an object of protest from many—and beyond it a Methodist chapel whose accommodations were limited, and whose circle of adherents was restricted.

The ladies, with much chatting and planning, had contributed many needed garments and other necessities for the soldiers, and their patriotic labors had now also designed and completed a banner for the Washington Life Guard. This company, the special escort of the Commander-in-chief, had been recruited from all the colonies, and was held to be the picked corps of the army. In view of the recent defection of some of its members, the occasion was thought fitting to impress on it the continued confidence of the army in its patriotism.

The banner now finished was ready to be inspected by General Washington and his staff, at this social gathering, and a day appointed for its formal and public presentation to the Guard. Mr. William Walton had tendered the use of his house and grounds for this important event.

Hubbard sought out his friend, Major Burr, who was equally pleased that the Lieutenant was to be present, for—as young lovers are always selfish—Hubbard, he added, might aid very much in that little affair of his. Miss Moncrieffe was to be there, but under the personal escort of Captain Webb, who had been trying to make himself agreeable to the young lady, Burr explained, and whom they proposed to outwit.

Hamilton also knew of the event, but he observed with an air of cheerful resignation, that he was not, like Burr, in sufficient touch with the best families, to be expected at a Walton House "Sociable"—all of which, as Miss Schuyler was still in town, and certain to be there, his friend knew to be forced, and he determined to secure Hamilton's presence as well.

"Ah, if you could, Hubbard!" the artillery captain responded, "I should be eternally grateful. But it is not likely," he said, in a despondent manner. "Everybody is trying for an invitation, and they are drawing the line close, I am told—some day it may be different—when it is too late."

With his purpose uppermost Lieutenant Hubbard waited upon Colonel Trumbull the next morning, but his intentions were nearly forgotten at the start, in the unexpected import of the instructions that awaited him. The Commissary was alone, and in a nervous frame of mind, racked by a violent cough which at times seized him, and which had caused him a restless night.

"You are to remember, Mr. Hubbard," said he,



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sharply, "that your attendance is not for your personal pleasure, but that you are on duty."

The Lieutenant expressed his understanding of that fact.

"Your duty will be to keep in sight at all times on the grounds the person of General Washington. He knows nothing of these precautions, and is not to know of them unless something should warrant it, so you are not to make yourself conspicuous by your presence. In any need, or if you should detect anything suspicious, three calls on this whistle, which you will take, will bring a company to your aid in half a minute, and a regiment if you need more."

"What!" exclaimed Hubbard. "Do you suspect an attempt—?"

"Suspect everything, everybody, till you find the true!" Colonel Trumbull interrupted, impatiently. "Who knows? E-tarnal vigilance is the price of liberty! How do we know but Walton may have a Tryon plot of his own? I wouldn't trust him, or any other trimmer. There's no use in locking the stable after the horse is stolen. But he'll not find us napping. Every entrance to the ground by land or water will be patrolled."

"Will no one but myself have instructions?" asked Hubbard after a pause.

"Aren't you enough?" queried Trumbull, as though his suspicions were not yet settled. "Yes, Captain Webb is to co-operate with you, but I rely on you, and have told him to report to you directly for any

action that may be required on the grounds. It might be well also to have a third—"

"Captain Hamilton would be reliable," suggested his aide.

"Eh, true! Tell him to see me—no, see him yourself, and instruct him. You will be in charge and responsible. Ye are to say naught to anyone, now or afterward, and report to me."

Lieutenant Hubbard departed at once to make preparation for the afternoon, and to inform Hamilton who could hardly credit the announcement. What other cause for the precautions there might be, aside from Colonel Trumbull's own suspicions which were known to be at all times active, they could only conjecture. But a plan of action was determined by the young men to relieve each other. With the co-operation of Webb the Commander-in-chief would be kept in sight of one of them at all times. Hamilton was to meet him on the grounds, where Hubbard would be in advance. The plan it was agreed might be carried out without interfering with those other arrangements by which Hamilton could secure at least a brief enjoyment of Miss Schuyler's society.

Mr. William Walton was a prominent merchant of the city, an affable, public-spirited gentleman, whose father had acquired a fortune in commerce, which had been increased by the son. He was one of the founders, a few years before the war, of that august body the Chamber of Commerce. The Waltons always appeared among the first in the Committees of Seventy, and other magic and mysterious multiples of the num-



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ber seven, which have so often warded off plague and disaster from this town, and whose potency in the solution of the problems of state and municipal reform, had been discovered at so early a period of the commonwealth.

At first Mr. Walton had been active and outspoken against the arbitrary measures that King and Parliament imposed on the colonies, but, since actual hostilities began he had taken a neutral position with many of the timid or conservative, whose interests were involved on both sides.



CHAPTER XI.

A WALTON HOUSE SOCIABLE.

On that balmy July afternoon Lieutenant Hubbard, with several extra lace ruffles, and a more elaborate shirt front, presented himself before the Walton House. A throng had already gathered to watch the arrival of distinguished guests and listen to the music of the Philadelphia Troop band. He noted that a company of the Grenadiers had formed in line outside the grounds, and a detachment of the Life Guard held the crowd in check. If Colonel Trumbull's suspicions were well founded he had also provided ample force at hand for a moment's emergency.

Making his way through the throng, Hubbard was ushered in at the central entrance with its great weird and grotesquely carved head over the lintel, to the spacious hallway, from the farther end of which a broad, mahogany stairway, black as ebony, led in dark shadow to the upper floors.

The Walton residence on the outskirts of town, at the head of Queen—which is since become Pearl Street—was one of the handsomest private homes in the colonies. In Parliament it had been pointed out as an instance of the wealth and extravagance of the colonists, who had the assurance to live in style equal



to the English gentry, for which assumption they deserved to be roundly taxed. The building of brick and stone, had been designed by English architects after the prevailing type of English mansions; the material was brought from abroad, and the interior was decorated with great taste and elegance, though the house had ever a cold and foreign air, not like the more familiar homes in town.

The grounds extended along the East River front, and a running brook from the Collect Pond fell in a cascade to a pretty pool, that continued its course to the river. Mr. Walton having a taste for landscape effect, the walks were laid through attractive lawns, groves and gardens, in which he took great pride, and from which he produced choice fruits and flowers of rare and beautiful varieties.

From a lack of acquaintance with social forms, Lieutenant Hubbard kept at a discreet distance in the rear of the group that preceded him. He held himself very erect and affable, maintaining from the tail of his eye a close observance for such movements as might prove useful for his guidance. The guests passed through the large drawing rooms to the lawn beyond, dispersing among the grounds or gathering about the ladies who directed the entertainment.

Hubbard was recognized and greeted by many whom he had met since he came to New York. The Chevalier Conway sauntered past in rich attire that indicated the arrival of the delayed wardrobe from Boston. With him were several gentlemen in civilian dress, one of whom Hubbard identified as a member of

the Congressional Commission in the Hickey trial. Conway's senses, ever alert, did not fail to observe the Lieutenant and throw him a pleasant salutation.

A hand was placed lightly on his shoulder at the same moment, and Hubbard turned to greet Major Burr. That young officer was aglow with suppressed excitement as he directed his glances expectantly about the grounds, telling his companion of this or that individual, whose greetings he returned. To one slender and precise elderly couple Major Burr raised his cocked hat and bowed profoundly. The gentleman in clerical habit returned the salute with equal profundity, and the stately, pleasant-faced little lady at his side executed an elaborate but most graceful curtsey before the two young men.

"It is a pleasure, Dr. Rogers," said Major Burr, introducing his friend, "to see Mrs. Rogers and yourself so well. Only yesterday I was told that Mrs. Rogers was ill, and was reminded of my neglect, that I had not seen you for a fortnight."

"Ah, my boy, we often hear of you," replied Dr. Rogers, resting a fatherly hand on Burr's shoulder. "What would my lamented friend, the late President of Princeton, have given could he but have known the promise of his son? Be cautious, my son! Be wise! Let not the little world vanities turn thy head."

The lady also contributed her kindly commendations, as with another bow and a curtsey they passed on.

"Old family friends, Hubbard," explained Burr. "Dr. Rogers is pastor of the Brick Church. They take



a parental interest in me, more than I am worth, perhaps; but they are the kindest and best-hearted people in the world, as well as the politest. 'Tis said, you know, that they never retire at night without that formal bow on his part, to which Mrs. Rogers responds with her curtsey. Isn't it one of the prettiest you ever saw a woman make?—Ah, Monroe! Glad to see you down from the Haerlem hills. Hubbard, you should know Lieutenant Monroe, of the Third Virginia."

Lieutenant Monroe, a slender youth with an intelligent face and a sympathetic smile, lingered a moment, as Burr added: "They are fortifying the Heights to hold Howe's army in check, I'm told. The other night I paid Monroe a visit while out on that wild goose chase of yours, Hubbard. They treated us like princes—the only compensation of that expedition."

Monroe joined a party among whom was Major Pinckney, the dashing macaronie. Graydon was also of the group, and two others, one of whom, a lank young man of dark complexion, Burr observed was Joel Barlow, a "poetic sprig." "The other, you should know. 'Tis a brother of your chief, Colonel Trumbull. He *aspires* to be a great painter. Pinckney is an Oxford cad. Graydon, there, is in his element with such classic company to furnish him ideas. Let's get back a bit, Hubbard, where we'll be less conspicuous, and I can say a word to you."

They retired to a friendly shade at a little distance, which commanded also a good view, while Burr explained that Miss Moncrieffe expected to be accom-

panied to the house, as anticipated, by Captain Webb, Burr proposed to accost them as soon as he saw Webb, and Hubbard was to improve the opportunity by inviting the young lady to a tour of the grounds. This would divert suspicion from Burr, who was to join them as soon as he could leave Webb, at a point agreed upon near the lake.

Arrivals now began to fill the grounds near the house. As Burr and his friend walked toward the mansion General Washington was announced, with Mr. John Adams, Generals Putnam, Greene, Lord Stirling and other members of the staff. Hubbard saw Captain Hamilton not far away, and just as Burr was becoming impatient they espied, at a little distance, the stalwart form of Captain Webb and the graceful figure of Miss Moncrieffe at his side.

In a light, gauzy summer dress, her face framed in a wide-brimmed Leghorn bonnet, a flush on either cheek that shamed the roses in the bonnet, her bright eyes dancing, Hubbard thought, like a twain of humming birds amid this bank of flowers, he was sure that he had never seen a prettier face or figure than the "little gazelle's." Her curtsy was all grace and airiness, but a flash directed to Burr from under the Leghorn bonnet was unobserved by her escort, who was nodding an understanding to Hubbard of their official duties.

"I knew not that you had met Mistress Moncrieffe," remarked Webb, as Hubbard began at once to make up to that young lady.

"I owe that to you when at the Hill, the other day," replied Hubbard.



Captain Webb was clearly surprised, as the young woman had plainly extended a warmer welcome to Hubbard than to Major Burr.

"Don't you think these grounds lovely, Colonel—I mean Captain Hubbard?" she inquired archly.

"They are new to me, but they are certainly beautiful," replied the Lieutenant.

"I am sure they must be like my own home in England, though I left it when a child."

"Would you not like a glimpse of them?" asks Hubbard. She thought it would be charming, and was sure that Captain Webb would be glad to be rid of the pother of looking after her. This, coming so precipitately, left that officer no pretext to interpose, and Hubbard moved away in triumph, while he still regarded them.

"I say, Burr, that's deuced cool," said Webb. "You'd best keep an eye on that Express. He's a Boston Yankee, and he'll take a house and lot if he can put hands on it."

"She takes sudden likings," returned Burr. "There's no telling a woman's fancy."

After a few moments Major Burr detached himself from Captain Webb on the plea of getting a word with General Putnam, and, in accordance with his plans, presently made haste to the place of rendezvous.

The resources of his establishment had been placed at the disposal of the ladies by Mr. Walton. An agreeable host at all times, on the present occasion he felt it incumbent, from his neutral attitude, to be particularly congenial. His services were at their com-

mand, and the ladies dispensed the honors as happily as though the town of York were not a huge military camp on the verge of a siege.

"Shall we not soon be caged in camp like nuns, Colonel Lee?" cries the vivacious Miss Kitty Stirling. "We must make the most of our freedom while we may."

"The doors of your prison never shall be closed," promised Colonel Harry Lee, and Colonels Duer, Laurens, Knowlton and a group of young officers. They were examining with profound interest the handiwork of Miss Kitty Stirling, Miss Gitty Wyncoop and other ladies, which was displayed in shirts and wearing apparel for the Continental soldier, and they were in full accord.

The ladies had not failed to make their part in the reception, as well as their costumes, attractive. If their gowns were not all of the most recent court fashions of George III. there were effects in silks and brocades not the less striking that they had seen previous service—no less famous than the present—within a generation. The toilette of many a colonial dame did credit to the artistic taste and fancy which is a birthright of American women, showing in pretty contrast and color with the simple gowns, in silver gray, of Mrs. Murray and her Quaker friends. Broad and swelling hoops did call forth the wonder of those who did not wear them, and it was whispered that Mistresses Kitty Stirling and Gitty Wynkoop in company, had been propped up with pillows the previ-



ous night to perfect the towering coiffures, constructed with so much art from their luxuriant tresses.

Mrs. Washington had been expected to preside, but she had not returned from Philadelphia, where, having been exposed to the contagion of small-pox, she had remained to undergo inoculation.

In her absence Mrs. Harry Knox was assigned the direction by general assent. Her tact and management were always consulted. Mrs. Putnam, with hearty New England sociability, rendered helpful aid in an elaborate robe of green satin—"like Ceres, goddess of spring, all verdure-clad," vowed Lord Stirling, who attended her, his ruddy features aglow with polite gallantry. Two rosy-cheeked daughters assisted her, and contributed untiring animation and energy, which Mrs. Knox tactfully distributed.

With the Commander-in-chief and staff were Mr. John Adams of Boston, of searching and querulous New England temperament; the incisive Dr. Benjamin Rush of Philadelphia; Captain Paul Jones equipped and restless on the verge of his first victories for 'American seamanship, and a group of well-known colonial representatives. General Washington, wearing buff waistcoat and dark blue uniform that was becoming without being conspicuous, presented the guests to the ladies. Mrs. Knox, young, graceful and animated, and her husband, had already established that friendship and confidence with the General and Mrs. Washington that were to outlast the war.

Washington's face, more than usually grave and preoccupied, brightened as he approached her group.

With women he was deferential and less reserved in public than with men, and her piquant manner, quick insight and cultivated ready and genial wit, were ever a source of pleasure to him.

"I feared lest something should detain you," she said, extending her hand, with a charming smile. "This is a personal pleasure, Mr. Adams. We insisted that Colonel Knox should be responsible for you this afternoon."

"You will acquit him with credit, madam," replied Washington, "but I think he will tell that 'twas an easy task to fetch us all."

"We will give him the honors," returned the lady with a pleasant glance for her husband. "'Tis a pity that Mrs. Washington could not be here," she added. "Your Excellency has had late advices from her?"

"Only this morning, madam. She is doing better than was expected, and hopes to be entirely well in a few weeks. The ladies have completed, I see, the banner for the Guard. It is truly a pretty piece of handiwork for so rough a duty."

The banner before them was a handsome strip of white silk on which had been painted the figure of a guardsman to whom a woman was confiding the flag as an emblem of liberty.

"You really like it?" she asked with pleasure. "It seems, indeed, a frail thing for so grim a purpose."

"Its delicacy, madam," said Dr. Rush, as the company admired the banner, "personifies the patriotism and purity of those who tender it."



"We shall trust the Life Guard to keep it unsullied, General," replied Mrs. Knox.

"In war, madam, as in love," said Lord Stirling, "we are never certain till the battle's won. But is this excellent painting also your work?"

"Oh, no indeed! I lay no claim to such accomplishment. 'Tis the hand of an enemy we have impressed, though a willing one."

"Oh!" cried the party with greater interest. "Tell us who did it!"

"My Lady Claremont, who is very clever and modest as well, did it for us."

"Did she paint it?" said Washington, inspecting it anew. "The execution is excellent."

"She can hear your praises," cried Mrs. Knox, with a merry laugh, turning the banner, which had concealed Lady Claremont and another group.

The lady curtsied with a girlish grace and dignity, coming forward with a smile in reply to her friend, a trace of brighter color in her cheek, and a deeper glow in her dark eyes.

"'Tis but a slight service from an enemy to win such favor," she said.

"'Tis volunteered," said Lord Stirling, with his most courtly bow, "like all service that comes to our country, and the more valued."

"You make pretty compliments, General Stirling," she returned, "but I do not think Lord Howe will take exception to volunteer acts of mine. You have yet no standard colors in your army, your Excellency?"

"None that have been determined," replied Washington, regarding the speaker closely.

"We ought to have a Continental flag, General," says General Putnam. "One with the picture of a sarpint jest gittin' ready to spring, would suit me, that reads: 'Don't tread on me!'"

"Has Congress not some design under consideration, Mr. Adams?" asked Mrs. Knox.

"Congress has had the subject before it," said Mr. Adams; "but a country's flag is not a matter to be determined in a day."

"The Philadelphia Troop, you remember, has a pretty design," she continued. "Often before Boston I noted how beautiful it looked unfurled—like a patch of the sky with its red and white bars."

"If 'twere set with a field of stars on a ground of blue, the fancy would be complete," Lady Claremont added.

"That could be easily produced," observed Washington. "'Tis too pretty a fancy to be forgotten."

"Do you still retain the English family arms, General Washington?" she inquired.

"I do not know that I have ever seen them" he replied.

"At Sulgrave, east of Warwick," continued Lady Claremont, "which is, you know, near the home of Shakespeare, I remember to have seen at the old Wessyngton Manor the Wessyngton family crest—a shield with stars and bars."

"How strange!" cried Mrs. Knox and the ladies.



"I have heard of such," replied Washington, "but we left them when we left England."

"Axe and spade, madam, are the most helpful arms in a new country," remarked John Adams, drily.

"Were Mr. Adams as English as his politics and coat of arms, are democratic, he would make a good Tory," said Captain Jones.

The Boston lawyer regarded the Scotch sailor with a look of distrust, but Lady Claremont added:

"Surely a lawyer will not omit the pen when he has used it so much and so effectively."

Mr. Adams nodded and his features relaxed as his eyes rested on the speaker.

"I fancy there is a destiny follows us sometimes that we cannot abandon," Lady Claremont continued, thoughtfully.

"I do not think, Mrs. Knox," observed Colonel Duer, "that General Gage will soon forget those banners as you saw them before Boston."

"Was it not you, Lady Claremont," Mrs. Knox returned, "who told me that General Gage is made much of since his return to England?"

"Perhaps so. Lady Howe writes me he is paid much distinction," the speaker continued with a smile; "and that 'tis rumored he is to be knighted Lord Lexington and Baron of Bunker Hill."

Mr. Adams was much pleased with the reference, and he manifested an increasing interest in the speaker. The ripple of merriment from the allusion was subsiding when Mr. Walton joined the party, and presently mentioned that he had been petitioned by

many ladies and gentlemen to request Lady Claremont to play for them on the piano-forte. It was known that she was an accomplished performer, and Mr. Walton added that he thought that Mr. Adams, and his Excellency and the gentlemen of his staff would be pleased with the music of this new instrument, to which Mr. Adams, his Excellency and staff assented, as did also the ladies, and the company presently made its way to the music room of the house.

Lieutenant Hubbard, following at a little distance, paused a moment to inspect the Life Guard banner, and to observe an officer who seemed about to leave the grounds, and whom he had met on occasions at Commissary quarters. This officer had several times passed him, loitering like himself, but behind him, and not far from the group of the Commander-in-chief. Hubbard first saluted and spoke:

"This is a fine afternoon, Captain Hale."

"As perfect as if it were made for such an occasion," replied Captain Nathan Hale, returning the salute.

"You are not leaving so soon?"

"I am obliged to report for duty."

"You will not then pass near the Commissary quarters?"

"I shall be pleased to if it will favor you, Lieutenant Hubbard."

"But I should not wish to trouble you."

"It will be no trouble, whatever."

"I wanted to report to Colonel Trumbull that all was going smoothly here, but—"



"I will gladly report to him, Lieutenant Hubbard. All is quiet, you say?"

"It is very kind of you, Captain Hale."

"Do not mention it, Lieutenant Hubbard."

"Ah," meditated Hubbard, looking after the retreating figure, "he speaks by rule, like a schoolmaster—but a live Connecticut Yankee all the same. I verily believe the Colonel has another looking after his suspicions, or perhaps after me. Well, where there's so much to suspect it will do no harm to keep one's eyes open wide."

CHAPTER XII.

EXERCISES IN HARMONICS.

A parlor at the northeasterly end of the Walton House served as the music room. A bay window from an alcove, in which the piano was placed, overlooked the grounds as they fell away to the river, and across the broad and rapid-running stream to the Brooklyn shores, as far as the curve at the Wallabout.

Pianos were finding their way with other luxuries into the colonies, and their praises had already spread for richness of tone far exceeding the harpsichord. Mr. Walton had purchased his instrument previous to the war, but it had reached the city only a few months since, and the owner was not displeased at an opportunity like this to present his guests so rare an entertainment.

Lady Claremont was a musician with natural gifts, imagination, and a cultivated and sympathetic interpretation. She played with easy grace, a sentiment and feeling that she communicated to her hearers. Her firm, yet delicate touch, so light on the keys as barely to breathe the softer notes at times, would presently quiver and thrill with power, her figure vibrating with the rhythm—her white and shapely arms seeming to give intelligence and soul to the music.



Those who heard the instrument for the first time were at loss, while expressing their appreciation, whether the charm was due to it or to the player. She played at first the popular airs, and, after several more elaborate compositions, passed to one that appeared to come from memory, or to be improvised—a languid, dream-strain, it rose in volume, the theme repeating itself in higher keys as in another atmosphere, or weirdly, like an incantation; lingering in a mood of reverie and soft modulations—quickenings and throbbing and breaking away in trills—the singing of a chorus of birds in the sunshine of a June morning.

Washington, a lover of music, in which he often indulged in his own home, followed the rhythm and expression with deep interest. The strange, fitful melody of the last selection especially affected him, he said to the player, as he told her the enjoyment her music had afforded him.

“’Tis strange,” he added, “how certain combinations of harmonies move us more deeply than others.”

“You are fond of music?” she asked, lifting her eyes to him, her face flushed and her breathing still quick and deep from exertion.

“I know but little save of its simpler forms,” he returned, with evident feeling. “But your melodies were like a charm, calling up tranquil and restful memories.”

“Did it never seem to you that melody has a language of its own, that is related, perhaps, to the past and to the higher nature that survives in us?”

"Pleasing sounds have surely a strong and subtle influence on our moods," replied he.

"I often feel," she continued, in her own low and musical tones, "that music touches a stronger and purer current of our being, as if it were another existence. It may run deeper in some of us, but sometimes it will come to the surface after the hard realities of life around us. Our greater imagination, the best thoughts and deeds that inspire us, I am sure, spring from such a source."

"And was this a written melody," he insisted, "or simply a fancy of your own?"

"Only in small part mine, that I have thrown together because it often pleases a mood in me; chiefly suggestions or variations of airs that I have caught from Handel's music of *L'Allegro*, and *Il Penseroso*, which I heard in London—those beautiful poems of Milton."

"When a lad I remember reading the *Paradise Lost* with a dim understanding, at the home of Lord Fairfax, in Virginia, where I spent many pleasant hours—some of the pictures have clung to me ever since."

"And do you care for poetry?" she asked. "I wonder often if a soldier feels the sentiment and sympathy of verse."

They had moved with the company from the house as they talked, following a path to the lawns and groves beyond. Her companion was conscious of a slight flush, in recollection, perhaps, of youthful hardihood in attempts at verse, but there was a pleasing, mesmeric charm in the company of this young woman, a restfulness like that quality in her music, in harmony



with the peacefulness and quiet of the shaded walks, and the fragrant air, away from the turmoil of a military camp.

"In America," he resumed, almost in soliloquy, without directly answering her query, "we are too much occupied with the present to dwell over the imaginative or the poetic. Your music recalls to me a wild grandeur of the woods and mountains that I knew as a young man; their beauty and solitude, when alone, drifting for days, often, without sight of human soul, on the waters of an unknown river, where white men of our race had never before been, it may be. Yet there was no oppressive sense of loneliness. One became part of while still distinct, from it all—wondering what it had been, what it is to be; what you are to it; and the wonder fills you with its all-pervading quiet, the mystery and content—as your melodies did."

"Oh, that is the real poetry to me. Its music and verse!" she exclaimed, her face kindling. "These grounds, those beautiful flowers, even the thrush singing yonder, seem but prepared to please our senses. Those puny blasts we hear from brazen throats, what compare with breaths from the skies that sweep the harps in forest hills and trumpet the hollows! In Nature there is profusion, and always something you never can quite grasp. 'Tis so with great poems, so simple, yet they grow ever upon you."

He did not at once reply. They moved along the shaded path, the foliage rustling gently, the touch of her swaying figure lending a mutual sympathy. Beside his taller stature she appeared slight and girlish.

Her complexion, clear and white, caught a glow of excitement that lent a warmer chestnut tint to her hair, swept back in dark rolls from her temples. The path turned with the limit of the grounds, and he continued with an abrupt change of topic, barely perceptible in his voice.

"Since you called at headquarters last week, Lady Claremont, I have spoken to Colonel Duer of your estate. He will probably represent New York in the Provincial Congress, and he has promised to place the matter fully before it. I think you need not fear any present difficulty. You might indeed return to England with assurance until affairs here are better ready for settlement."

"Is your Excellency confident, then, of so speedy a settlement?" she asked, with no appearance of noting the change, save that the color left her face.

"I do not say that, madam; but little, I suspect, can yet be done by us. Should English power prevail you will have no need of our services."

"Can you doubt, General Washington," she said, regarding him directly, "that England's power will prevail?"

"Do we, then, seem so weak?" he replied, half musingly.

"How can these poor colonies long resist her wealth and might? What, indeed, have you to hope or gain from it all, even with success?"

"Do you not think, my dear Lady," he replied gently, "that there may be questions larger than indi-

vidual gain, which involve a great country and a whole people?"

"But it is the few who profit, and will thrive by this!" she returned, impulsively. "You are surely not of those who would sacrifice others for selfish motives. How many lives have already been spent! What suffering for a few catchwords! Can anyone hope to benefit from such means? What glory can they bring that will repay for the groans and misery that they have caused?"

"If the purpose is just, madam—not the glory—" he replied, with a simple dignity and impressiveness, "we can no more than do the plain tasks that Providence sets us. In that we all share pains and penalties alike. A conscious purpose must suffice for all to pursue honestly for its accomplishment. This has ever been the plain duty of Englishmen who have made the name of England strong and dear. It is a birthright that in America we come by justly. This great continent we have made our own and established in it a broader liberty for which we stand, and, please God, we will maintain."

The unaffected earnestness and sincerity of his manner for the moment appeared to disconcert his companion; the simple faith and resolve that it manifested from his clearer insight were unexpected.

"But you were not all consulted," she continued, "and your Congress only in part wishes to separate from England!"

"In time of peril the family can only follow the wisdom of those whom it trusts."

"Your Excellency's long time friends, Mr. Boucher, Lord Fairfax—the best and wisest people of these colonies—do they not condemn such action and withdraw from it?"

"Their action is according to their lights; one could not ask them to do differently; nor should it influence the conscience of those who think otherwise."

"Ah, sir," said his companion, resting a hand—as white as marble and delicately shaped—lightly on his arm. "Your faith has all but shaken my own confidence of the right. I believe your mind is fair and noble. I have heard my Lord Howe speak as much of your honor and unselfishness. You once were loyal to that England of which you have just spoken in praise. Is there not now a time when you may set a noble example in making peace, for your whole country's good? How many poor lives may such action of yours direct and prolong? How much mis-spilled blood, here and over the sea, may it check, and how many voices would be lifted in gratitude?"

Her face, intense and pleading, looked up to his—such a face, and the voice low, clear and persuasive, would have stirred more sluggish blood. He paused for an instant, but if it had caused his blood to flow faster, that did not appear in the calm, restrained, glance downward into her deep eyes.

"Is it Lady Claremont now speaking, or Sir William or Lord Howe?" he asked.

"Sir William and Lord Howe are my friends," she replied, "and their sister, Lady Howe, has been more than a friend to me. Can you not believe that woman,



however weak, may equally hope to do her country a service, as well as man?"

"What is it that you would have me do?"

Her glance trembled beneath his for an instant, but for the instant only.

"I would have you place your name among the highest for your country's welfare—not for your king only, for humanity! As high as that of Monk or Marlborough—for which no honors that it could confer would be too great."

"Such a place, madam, would be too high for me," said Washington. "Even had I the power, or influence, on which you place too much stress, no elevation or favor could disguise its plainer meaning to those whose confidence I hold dear. In this newer world we live with plain standards. No gift of King or Parliament would compensate the loss of public trust, my country's honor, and my own respect."

"Do you not see that failure will mean ruin, disgrace, death?" she said, trembling, and with a long breath, as if in a fever.

"To some of us, doubtless, but not to the cause we believe in."

"Oh, I cannot understand!" she cried, with a look that implied belief. "Can you mistake your friends—those who wish you well?"

"Our friends would not wish us ill."

"You will convince me of your right, against myself! But you are cold, immovable!"

"I am as all men," he returned, an effort of restraint passing in a tremor through his voice, and the large

gray eye deepening to a blue—"I think they are looking for us. Do you not see those Brooklyn hills that overlook the town, Lady Claremont?"

She collected herself with an effort, following the direction that he indicated, as Mrs. Knox, with Mr. Walton, came up, and Washington continued in tones that were entirely natural.

"Mrs. Knox, whose husband is an artillery officer, will tell you that a few cannon on yonder hills would destroy the entire British fleet did it attempt to pass."

"And might they not as easily destroy this city if they were British cannon?" responded Lady Claremont.

"We had begun to fear that my Lady Claremont had spirited away your Excellency!" Mrs. Knox exclaimed, pleasantly, but with a woman's rapid survey.

"I have shown General Washington what beautiful grounds you have, Mr. Walton," Lady Claremont said in her quiet tones. "I think he will admit that nothing in his Virginia surpasses them."

"I am indebted to you, sir," replied Washington, "and to Lady Claremont, for such an agreeable hour as I frequently long for when I think of my own home on the Potomac."

"These gardens are my pleasure," Mr. Walton replied with something like a sigh. "Once the troubled times settled, I hope to hold them through my little life; but shop and trade will soon, I expect, fill every plot of land this side of Collect Pond."

"Do you think the town will indeed grow so great?" asked Mrs. Knox.



"I do not doubt, madam, though I may not live to see, it will some day rank among the first on earth, like ancient Syracuse with its five-fold harbor," replied he, with the presage of commerce. "No city port in Europe is so large and fair, none has so sure a promise of supply. The sail of all nations may have room and to spare on these waters, and they may sometime waft hither greater riches than the Indies. But refreshments are awaiting your Excellency, and they will be more to the taste of ladies than empty speculation on the future.

The company was already gathered in the large dining room when they reached the house, where the heavy Walton plate and the rich china service that Parliament had pointed out as proof of the lavish wealth and prodigality of the colonists, did justice to the occasion and to the hospitality of the host.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MAN OF THE DARK BEARD.

With the transfer of Miss Moncrieffe to Major Burr, who had promptly appeared, Lieutenant Hubbard had agreed to secure for them, when the guests began to leave, one of the boats in the pond, which he was to hold in readiness at a point selected where a narrow path led from the main walk down under the lilac and witch-hazel shrubbery to the water.

"I know a pretty route up-stream," Major Burr had said, "across country to Richmond Hill, round among the woods, where wild flowers, buttercups and June roses grow;" and the little Puritan cousin had assented to it without a murmur.

Having arranged with Captain Webb to continue in sight and call of the Commander-in-chief, until relieved by him, Hubbard lingered an attentive listener to the music of the piano-forte. The pianist he identified at sight as the lady of the Murray coach, but she showed no recollection of him. Her eyes, indeed, rested on him for an instant as she passed with General Washington and her party—so close as to brush him with her dress—but with no shade of recognition. Not so remarkable, Hubbard concluded on afterthought, con-



sidering his new uniform, and the transformation the Express had undergone in the Lieutenant.

He would have been better pleased had her glance indicated a consciousness of that remarkable transformation—but he could hardly have expected so much, Her eyes glowed brightly and her deep, low voice reached him with a thrill as they passed, the company and the Commander-in-chief engrossing her full attention. After the music, as they moved down the path from the house, Hubbard again assured himself that Captain Webb was holding them in view from a proper distance, before he turned in search of his friend Hamilton, of whom he had yet only caught a glimpse on the grounds.

The Yankee officer was not burdened with the apprehensions of Colonel Trumbull, and he entertained no fear that the Lady Claremont was possessed of the powers of Salem witchcraft by which she might place a spell on the American leader, or spirit him from the grounds bodily, in thin air. But he was too well skilled in woodcraft, and too conscientious a huntsman to neglect the game on which he had once been set stalking. Another voice called him by name as he looked about for his friend. It was Mrs. Knox who stood chatting with a group in which were the saucy Mistress Gitty Wynkoop, Miss Betty Schuyler and Miss Murray. She beckoned him thither, presenting him as a fellow townsman, the discoverer of the Tryon Plot.

"Oh, young ladies!" she cried, with quick perception

of Miss Wynkoop's mischievous smile, "I did not think that you had already met!"

"We have, indeed, once had the pleasure of Lieutenant Hubbard's company," said Miss Murray pleasantly, relating the occasion, a little after which Mrs. Knox finding that her services were not needed, left these young people to themselves.

"I did not suppose you would have remembered me," the Lieutenant said.

"We knew you at once, even with the change," Miss Schuyler replied, smiling. Hubbard made an inward note of satisfaction on the agreeable countenance and manner which had charmed his friend.

"When we heard of the plot," added Miss Wynkoop, "we were sure it must be you who had brought word of it. Polly was first to remark it."

"Now thou art hasty to be proper, Gitty Wynkoop," responded Miss Murray, quickly.

"And you will presently become as proper and precise of speech as thy brother Lindlev," laughed Miss Wynkoop merrily. "I appeal to Betty if it were not you?"

"'Tis your way, Gitty, to get into scrapes, and to call your friends to help you out," returned Miss Schuyler.

"Father," Miss Murray addressed the broad and congenial Robert Murray who stood near, "will it please thee to meet this young gentleman?"

The merchant accosted Hubbard cordially. No less did Mrs. Murray, whose calm and pleasant face within her silver-gray bonnet reflected those traits the daugh-



ter had inherited. The Murrays were a cultivated and intelligent family. They had acquired a competence by trade in New York, and with it as well the respect and esteem of the community. Of Quaker faith they were staunch friends and admirers of Washington, and while holding aloof, were in sympathy with the American cause.

Hubbard was quickly at ease in the company of the young ladies, finding compensation for his vanity, if it were ruffled by the disregard of Lady Claremont. Their searching inquiries and artless feminine curiosity about his ride from Boston did not disconcert his native confidence, and his Yankee wit soon placed him on a standing of youthful good fellowship. The genial disposition of Miss Schuyler especially pleased him, while he wondered at the same time what could have become of Captain Hamilton, that he should delay so long a timely appearance.

A glimpse of him presently as the party sauntered along the walks showed the poor artillery captain so woebegone and disconsolate, following the skirts of their movements, that Hubbard could hardly reconcile it in his mind with the assured and resourceful young officer of his acquaintance. All efforts to direct his attention were fruitless, without openly attracting that of the ladies, until, with a bit of strategy, Hubbard retraced their steps, unexpectedly, directing them to one side where Hamilton, fairly entrapped in a *cul-de-sac*, could not make an escape.

"Here is my friend, Captain Hamilton!" the Lieu-

tenant exclaimed in surprise. "I believe he is even now planning some attacks on the British with his artillery company, by which he hopes to capture Sir William Howe and win the honors from us all."

Hamilton came forward, blushing and confused, the ladies receiving him with so much favor, however, that he soon began to feel at ease and recover his natural vivacity.

"I fear me that Captain Hamilton prefers his own thoughts to ladies' company," Miss Murray observed. "He hath twice passed us this afternoon without so much as noting our presence."

"'Tis because he is on duty," said Hubbard; "but I am to relieve him now and he need not fear that the British will take us unaware."

"Is it true," asked Miss Schuyler archly, to whose side Hamilton had gravitated by natural attraction, "that soldiers become so engrossed in their duties as to overlook their friends?"

"To overlook, but not to avoid them," replied Hamilton, the color mounting to his fair face at his own assurance.

"Which means that he sees us when we do not suspect," said the shrewd Miss Wynkoop.

"But that his best thoughts and wishes are in our company," added Miss Murray.

They chatted now with the buoyant gaiety of youth. Miss Wynkoop was called elsewhere by other demands, and Hubbard found that Miss Murray entered so congenially into his martial enthusiasms that his estimate of the intelligence of the average young woman, and



of this one in particular, was greatly raised. He found opportunity to make inquiry of Lady Claremont, of whom Miss Murray spoke with much regard.

"But I thought thou didst know her even better than we?" she continued, with a mild, though searching glance of inquiry for which he could not at the moment account.

"I had never met her," he replied in good faith, forgetting the East Chester Tavern, or the note he had returned.

"We thought that thou might have known her in Boston," she responded, with the same glance of inquiry.

"She saw me hand the note to Lady Claremont," was his inward comment, partly betraying itself to her perception as he hastened to add: "Lady Claremont's memory is not as good as yours—at least she did not recognize me to-day."

"Lady Claremont is much liked in town," replied Miss Murray, "and we hardly think of her as an English woman of British sympathies, her tastes and manners being so agreeable, and in many things she is with the American cause."

The party rejoined Mr. and Mrs. Murray as the evening drew near. Hubbard withdrew to attend his official duties, but not until Robert Murray had extended to the young officer an invitation, much prized among the Continental line, to call at the Inclenberg, their Murray Hill home. The Lieutenant carried with him a vivid impress of their Quaker personality, and of the Quaker maid who had observed that secret

passage of the note to Lady Claremont. But these thoughts were to be set aside as he hastened to assure himself of the presence of the Commander-in-chief in the Walton House, and then to make good his appointment with Major Burr and Miss Moncrieffe.

The sun had already fallen behind the Jersey hills, leaving them outlined on a sky of orange, deepening to crimson. Dusk was settling over the grounds by the time he had secured one of the light boats, and directed it with a few strokes to the head of the stream. He made it fast beside the path through the bushes, where another boat was also moored, at which he wondered if this were a meeting place for others as well. All seemed strangely quiet after the bustle of the recent throng.

The voices of his friends reached him as he ran up the path. They had just come up, and were not conscious of delay on his part. Hubbard remained behind keeping a lookout at the head of the path, until Burr, having assisted Miss Moncrieffe into the boat, sprang in after her. As he pushed them from the bank Hubbard discovered that Burr had taken the wrong boat—not the one he had secured them, he explained.

"'Tis no great matter," his friend said. "The other fellow has the best of it. His boat is a heavy tub; but 'twill do for a short trip. Hist, Hubbard! There's someone coming now."

Burr lifted his oars, permitting the current to carry them swiftly and silently down the stream. Hubbard, to avoid explanations, stepped aside and concealed himself at a little distance in the shrubbery.



Two figures, a man and a woman, came down the path from the walk. The voice of the man was low and deep, while the woman, who wore about her head a kind of hood, he could scarcely hear at all. Hubbard would have pushed his way on through the brush rather than remain in this unsought position, but the undergrowth was too dense to make headway, and he was forced to remain quiet to prevent discovery in this unpleasant situation.

"Did you hear voices?" the man asked.

"They were on the water," her reply came faintly. "Hasten! Some one may come at any moment. Why do you take such useless risks, Colonel Simcoe?"

"I would double them at an assurance from you," replied he.

Hubbard's Yankee curiosity was aroused, and he forebore to close his ears. The light was sufficient for him to see that the man, who was of stout and compact build, wore an officer's uniform. His voice seemed familiar, though he could not at the instant place it.

"This is worse than recklessness," she said impatiently, "for which discovery you would pay dearly, beside compromising us both."

"You have not given me a pleasant word," he responded.

"I do not wish you here, and I am in a strange mood, nervous and almost ill to-night."

"Let me go with you back to the house?"

"No, it will relieve me if you will leave at once. I shall go if you do not."

"Shall I report assurances of your success."

"There is nothing of which to make report."

"They are anxious to know if you expect to establish negotiations."

"I shall find means of communicating when I need them. That ill projected violence has, as I expected, made all difficult."

"They were a pack of idiots to make such a mess. I could have taken him alone as you walked past."

"You would not have dared!" she raised her voice in alarm.

"I would have dared but for your presence."

"You do not know what you say, Simcoe," she replied. "These grounds have been under close guard to-day. The Americans will deal in no sentiment now."

The listener started, feeling that he had now a justifiable interest in this conference, but he was to be more startled by what followed.

"I should have dared anything," the man added fiercely, "had I seen Conway more closely."

"I am not like to hear from him," replied his companion, her voice becoming more distinct.

"He shall hear from me if war brings us together again. I promised my brother, your husband, that I would square accounts with Conway if ever we met. I believe the time is coming."

"It is a closed book," she replied. "I would not, he surely will not, wish to open it."

She placed a hand on the arm of her companion, who had disregarded caution in his excitement. The



movement releasing her hood, brought the profile of her features in the line of light. Hubbard recognized at once the face of Lady Claremont, and placed with this recognition the voice of her companion, the dark-bearded man of the East Chester Tavern. He checked himself, but not without a rustling of the foliage, that caused them to pause and listen.

"'Tis the breeze in the branches," he said. "Ah! How is this!"

"What is the matter?" she asked, nervously.

"Nothing! Only this is not my boat."

"Take it. I will remain no longer," she commanded.

He caught her hand, pressing it to his lips and thrusting the boat from the bank sprang into it with a lightness unexpected in one of his weight. She waved an adieu, running swiftly up the bank as the boat was carried into the deepening shadows.

Hubbard followed after several minutes, returning to the house. The guests had nearly all departed, and he saw no more of Lady Claremont, although Miss Murray had said she was staying at the Walton residence.

Captain Hamilton was on duty for the night, and Colonel Trumbull had left headquarters when he arrived, at which the Lieutenant felt no regret. The conjectures that beset him over the unexpected developments of the past hour puzzled even the proverbial Yankee faculty of guessing. Who this Colonel Simcoe was, whose name he had never before heard, the pronounced hostility to Conway, and other numerous and



startling suggestions, he was well pleased to sleep over before reporting on them to the Commissary.



CHAPTER XIV.

OF WILD CHERRIES AND THEIR VIRTUES.

Colonel Trumbull did not permit his physical ills to interfere with the performance of his duties. He was suffering from a bronchial attack contracted in a recent night expedition on the water, in which he had been exposed to a heavy fog. His lungs were weak, and restless nights left him impatient and irritable. The system with which he had organized the innumerable detail for the provision and transportation of army supplies had been of incalculable value to the army. Its importance was fully recognized by the Commander-in-chief, who trusted him implicitly, and gave him complete supervision of camp affairs. But he was not less exacting of others than of himself, which Lieutenant Hubbard was quick to learn, and in consequence he reported shortly after daybreak, the morning after the Walton House sociable.

The Commissary was already deep among documents at a table in a side room. Though somewhat improved his features were more pale and haggard than Hubbard had yet seen them. His voice was rasping and husky, and he had frequent recourse after spasms of coughing to a medicine bottle at his side, from which he drew long draughts.

"I want you to see Captain Tupper," he announced, almost before the door had closed on Hubbard's entrance. "A lot of supplies have been waiting two days over at Hackensack and we must get them in to-night."

"Shall I go over with Captain Tupper?" asked the Lieutenant.

"Yes; see that he gets right off, and that the things are turned over to him at once. Here are the papers."

Hubbard glanced over the documents, placing them within his coat. Colonel Trumbull continued his occupation, forgetful, apparently of any other presence or his Walton House instructions issued the day before, for report.

"I asked Captain Hale to tell you that all was quiet when he left the Walton House yesterday afternoon," said his aide.

"Yes, he told me," was the reply, without looking up.

"And I came in later but you were gone."

"Eh! What time were ye here?"

"A little after eight, I think it was."

"Did ye see the lady home?"

Hubbard started. Colonel Trumbull, who was observing him from the corners of his eyes, had evidently learned of the whole matter of which Hubbard thought himself only acquainted, and of which he had been considering at great pains what he was in duty bound to report.

"You seem to be something of a lady's man. Captain Webb says you relieved him of the care of Miss



Moncrieffe," continued the Commissary, resuming his writing.

"Oh!" said the Lieutenant, smiling and relieved. "We just took a little walk around the grounds when we met Major Burr, whom she is acquainted with. Then I left 'em."

"Ah, I see; just by accident, I 'spose," said the Commissary, scratching his long sallow nose with the end of his quill.

"After General Washington had gone I met them again with a boat that Burr wanted. They took that way home."

"That little Burr is always a-scootin' after petticoats," Colonel Trumbull observed. Then he added, throwing a keen glance at the Lieutenant: "I s'pose ye think we made a lot of fuss and feathers for nothin'!"

"There were two boats," said Hubbard, "and Major Burr got the wrong one."

"Oh, he did, did he? Whose was the other?" asked the Commissary, looking up.

"A man and a woman came down for the other boat. I had to step aside and wait."

Colonel Trumbull became interested, and something like a grin parted his thin, pale lips. "So you had to step aside, did ye, eh? Did they take the other boat?"

"The man did; the woman went back to the house."

"Who was the man? Could ye tell?" The Commissary now gave complete attention.

"He seemed to be an officer, and in uniform but I have never heard of him here abaout."

"Stout and thick-set, about thirty?"

"Yes, that sort of a man."

"Who was the woman?" exclaimed Trumbull, swinging about and facing Hubbard.

"It was the Lady Claremont."

"Well, I'll be danged!" cried Colonel Trumbull, with an agitation that brought on a fit of coughing, only partly relieved by application to the medicine bottle, when he exclaimed: "Did they have nothing to say? Couldn't ye hear?"

Hubbard stated in substance the conversation so far as he deemed it a part of his duty to make report.

"By Godfrey!" was the ejaculation of Colonel Trumbull, which—not being given to profanity—was the limit that he fixed for exclamation. He walked several times up and down the room repeating, half to himself: "I knew it! I said so! Simcoe, she called him, you say? Colonel Simcoe, Mr. Hubbard, is a British officer. He wore our uniform, and had our countersign. If Captain Tupper had ketched him, as he ought to have done, he would hang as a spy, as high as Haman."

"He is Lady Claremont's brother-in-law, and came to see her," said Hubbard.

"What does that matter? A spy all the same. He thought he might have taken Washington himself! Ha! we would have had him then in a mouse trap."

"It was Colonel Conway for whom he seemed to hold a grudge," said Hubbard.

"Conway! Ah, you said they mentioned him. That



was a trick. It was General Washington they were planning for."

"I don't think Lady Claremont had that idea," replied Hubbard, on whom a light began to break, but was still confusing. "She had not expected Simcoe. She did not want him there."

"What did she want? She led General Washington off through the grounds, right in that direction"

"But she did not know that Simcoe was there."

"She did not! Where did the Boston Committee get their information of the Hickey business, Hubbard?" asked Colonel Trumbull, facing him.

The Lieutenant had no knowledge on that point.

"Do you know who the woman was they said writ it?"

He had no information either in this direction.

"You didn't know Lady Claremont in Boston?"

Hubbard replied that he had not known her there, remembering that the same question had been asked him by Miss Murray the previous afternoon. But he did not feel called upon to repeat the East Chester Tavern incident.

"You don't know her, then? Never met her before?" persisted his cross-examiner.

"She was with Miss Murray's party," he replied, mentioning the Boston Road meeting.

"You're not stuck on her, be ye?" queried the inquisitor, with sharp glance.

The cadet was tickled with the novelty of this intimation, and grinned a negative.

"Well, mebbe you're right," said the Commissary,

only half satisfied. "I wouldn't trust any of 'em" — another fit of coughing interrupted him.

"Did you ever try wild cherries for your cough?" inquired Hubbard, sympathetically improving an opening to divert cross-questioning.

"Wild cherries, how?"

"We pick 'em ripe, and let them soak in a jug of New Bedford rum for a month or more. It's a good cure for a cough."

"I should think it might be—not choke cherries?"

"No, the wild cherries. They get ripe about this time."

"I'll get some and try 'em. You have not said anything about Colonel Simcoe to any one?"

The Lieutenant replied that he had not mentioned it, and his chief directed him not to speak of it. Colonel Trumbull seemed quite as pleased over the discovery, as if they had actually taken the British officer, the facts sustaining his suspicions and the precautions he had taken. "By Godfrey!" he repeated half aloud, "I was not far out after all, Mr. Hubbard. See that Captain Tupper attends to those supplies without delay, Lieutenant. You can be back before night to let me know if they are all right. Wait till I write down that recipe: 'Fill the jug with ripe, wild cherries, and cover them with prime, New Bedford rum'—is that all?"

"Rock sugar to taste; soak for a month or more."

"Hm! I rather like them bitters."

"I've seen wild cherries thick, up by Fordham Heights. I'll have some picked for you, Colonel."



"Much obliged, thankee," responded the Commissary, resuming his quill and papers as Hubbard departed on his commission to Hackensack, but with a more congenial manner than Hubbard had known him to display.

His friendly disposition continued thereafter, though he did not again refer to the Walton House incident. It continued to occupy and puzzle the Lieutenant. He could not persuade himself from what had reached him, that the interest of Lady Claremont was, as the Commissary suspected, directed against Washington. Her words and those of Simcoe, who might have had such purpose, contradicted the belief. That there appeared some remarkable secret motive in her presence in the city, he could not deny. That letter he had returned to her would have probably revealed it all. He would watch meanwhile, he said to himself, if the opportunity presented, as it well might. But the eventful days to come were each filled with its own duties, giving him little chance to pursue other inquiries.

The week following the Walton House "Sociable" the banner that the ladies had fashioned was presented in public to the Washington Life Guard.

The whole town of York took part in the presentation, and was afforded a glimpse of the Continental Army, which made as brave a show that day, in parade from the Common to Bowling Green, as any company which has tramped Broad Way Street, before or since. At the Green, where it was reviewed by General Washington and staff, and the fair Colonial dames, the presentation was made. Afterward the soldiers

marched back again through Great Queens—which has since become Pearl—and Broad streets amid great shouts and cheering.

Every one of the thirteen colonies that were making so great a stir in the world, was represented in the Life Guard. It led the procession in its blue coats and half-gaiters, white waistcoats and breeches, its cocked hats and long, white plumes and muskets with long shining bayonets.

After the Life Guard came the gallant troop of Philadelphia Light Horse, and then marched a battalion of Colonel Smallwood's dashing "Macaronies" from Baltimore, followed by other Pennsylvania companies in brown and buff; Delaware volunteers in red and blue; Virginia, Georgia and Carolina corps in broad-rimmed, slouch hats and smart frocks furbelowed with ruffles; the lithe, brown riflemen of New York and New Jersey, and sturdy New England Yankee rangers in plain frocks of homespun and tow.

There were the rugged veterans of the Connecticut Light Horse, some of them in shirt sleeves—the August morning being hot—and others in uniforms of faded blue, tarnished since the French war, but all formidable with their long cutlasses, blunderbusses and shot guns. Last and not least was the City Company of Artillery—Captain Alexander Hamilton, who commanded, not much taller than one of his own guns which he stood beside and patted proudly. Lieutenant Jonathan Hubbard, in full uniform with lion-headed sword, rode at the head of the column with Major Burr and a group of staff officers.



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These warriors made great promise of what the united colonies would accomplish in war. The crowd tossed up its hats and cheered itself red in the face and hoarse. And the dust rose in clouds over the city as if a battle were already being fought, causing the British from their ships to wonder if these wild Yankee recruits had some fresh ruse on hand which they were putting into practice.

CHAPTER XV.

DOG DAYS IN THE SUMMER OF '76.

No more "sociables" were to be given in the town of New York for many a day by the Continental ladies. The August dog-days advancing, troops arrived and departed and fortifications were pushed at every point. Women and non-combatants began to leave the island for safer quarters, those who remained keeping housed, unless they had business abroad and a military permit.

One morning a boat was signalled off the Battery from the British fleet, under a flag of truce. In it were Colonel Patterson and several British officers, who asked to communicate with the American commander. Among the officers whom should Lieutenant Hubbard recognize but the bold figure of Colonel Simcoe in full scarlet British uniform, face clean shaven, holding himself with an easy, confident swing.

Being conducted to headquarters, Colonel Patterson produced a letter from my Lord Howe to "Mr. Washington." No such person being known in the Continental Army, the letter was declined with thanks, and the British officers escorted back to their boat, returned to their ships.

A few days later they came again with better directions, and were then presented to General Washing-



ton. Lord Howe expressed his profound desire to redress all complaints, and to grant full pardons to every one, being fully empowered by Parliament, and his gracious majesty, George III. The young Commander-in-chief, listening respectfully, replied with quiet dignity, that the American people, having only maintained their just rights, were conscious of no wrongs committed, and sought for no pardons.

"Your Excellency has no commands for me to my Lord Howe?" asked the officer.

"None," replied his Excellency, with great courtesy. "But we shall be pleased if the gentlemen of my Lord Howe's staff will honor us by taking a refreshment."

And the gentlemen, having an appetite, accepted the hospitality, and returned with their report.

Sir William Howe, believing that this fervent Yankee patriotism was a kind of midsummer madness that would evaporate with the dog-day heat, was not disposed to exert himself in the torrid August temperature. He did not cease in his efforts at reconciliation, but all negotiations, implied threats and carefully planned diplomatic arts alike came to naught with these hot-headed rebels.

Rumors circulated, but never came to pass, of secret expeditions by night to strike the British in their Staten Island camp. The American navy, consisting of a mosquito flotilla of barges, bum-boats and sloops, under the command of Captain Benjamin Tupper, a skilled seaman of the port, kept a vigilant patrol of the water front, making raids of the enemy or the communications of Tory spies unsafe. Now and then a

British ship sailing up the Hudson at a respectful distance from the American batteries would drop a cannon ball into town and cause a panic among women and children. The batteries would reply fiercely. The Flying Camp and the aides would dash recklessly through the streets. Troops would be drawn up in battle array from the Bowling Green to Haerlem Heights, after which all would settle down in quiet.

Every one did his best to keep cool. That August was one of those scorching months which New Yorkers know from experience, and dragging hot and dry to a close without other issue, it began to look as if all talk of war was to end in talk.

Lieutenant Hubbard's frequent excursions among Jersey and Long Island farmers for supplies extended his acquaintance with the neighboring country and with rank and file. More than once he had encountered the sturdy Corporal Tim Cotton of Captain Glover's Marblehead boatmen, who had helped him to care for his horse the night of his arrival at Fraunce's Tavern. As the representative of the Commissary Hubbard had free access through all lines, and authority to make use of the navy in the transportation of troops or supplies. Of Lady Claremont he got no sight, nor heard aught after that evening at the Walton House, save one intimation that she had returned to Boston. He saw less of his friends, but occupied with his duties he was content and conscious that he was contributing his full share to the country's history.



The Chevalier Conway was much of this time in Philadelphia, pushing his fortunes to better advantage with Congress, than in camp, during inactivity. Major Burr was on duty in Brooklyn, and Miss Moncrieffe had been transferred to Mrs. Putnam's household, to her satisfaction as well as Burr's.

Captain Hamilton and Hubbard, frequently thrown together, indulged in many wise forecasts of events, to their own gratification, although their conclusions rarely came to pass. He heard much of Miss Schuyler, which topic on his friend's part seemed inexhaustible, though somewhat lacking in variety to an ardent patriot and soldier like the Yankee officer. He often marvelled at his friend's fond lunacy, and that he made no more progress in this acquaintance to which so much thought and devotion were given.

One afternoon he met Hamilton in high feather on the way to his company post on Bayard Hill, and having the time at his disposal Hubbard accompanied him up Broad Way Street. Hamilton had been invited that evening with Colonel Knox and a party to tea at the Inclenberg on Murray Hill, where he expected to meet Miss Schuyler previous to her departure for her home, in Albany. General Greene, one of the officers whom Hamilton held in high estimation, had recently told Colonel Knox, Hamilton repeated to Hubbard, that his City Artillery Company should be afforded a chance at the first opportunity to display its mettle.

A crowd in the Coffee House, the headquarters of the Sons of Liberty, at the juncture of Bowery Lane,

as they passed attracted them. Certain publications of Rivington's Gazette, a rabid Tory periodical, were under discussion, the speaker denouncing them fiercely, urging that Rivington's office be raided and emptied into the street. Hamilton had been an active spirit in this organization before he entered the army, and being recognized, a cry went up for him:

"It's little Hamilton, the West Indian!" was shouted. "Speech! Speech from Captain Hamilton!"

The young officer flushed, but in no way daunted or abashed, took the platform, and with tact, good sense and eloquence set forth the objections to an act of violence on the part of the organization. His audience followed him with close attention, and the current of feeling which favored the raid was changed as Hamilton sat down, after assuring his hearers that if Rivington had not the good sense to recognize the situation his career was likely to be cut short presently by military authority. He was loudly cheered, and Hubbard, to whom he had alluded as a member of the Boston Sons of Liberty, was called for.

The Lieutenant, in contrast with Hamilton's manner, had humor, ready speech and the native gifts and arts of a stump orator, united with his youthful confidence. He caught favor at the start with a pleasant anecdote, and he carried along several humorous fancies to the same purpose as his friend, closing with a patriotic peroration that fired his hearers' enthusiasm, and brought them to their feet with applause. Hamilton joined in the congratulations, as did also a heavy, plainly dressed man, who came forward. Hubbard



recognized him as the Mr. Paine, Dr. Franklin's acquaintance, at his first dinner in Fraunce's Tavern.

"I did not suppose you so much of an orator," said Hamilton, as they crossed the Common, when they could get away from the Coffee House. This unexpected gift of his new friend was a further revelation of his qualities.

"Who is this man Paine?" Hubbard asked as Hamilton appeared to know him.

"Don't you know Tom Paine?" exclaimed his friend. "'Tis the 'Private' who writes those articles 'On a Drumhead' for the Crisis, from the army."

"That accounts for his being with Dr. Franklin," replied Hubbard. "They say 'tis he also who has writ 'Common Sense.'"

"Which you cribbed so freely in your little wind-up," laughed Hamilton, Hubbard having borrowed liberally from the political tract in his closing flight of eloquence.

"I know it," replied the young orator unabashed. "I only read it the other day, and it just came to me."

"You think ideas have free currency?"

"Well, the first fellow who thinks them aout should have the credit, but they were just my ideas, and they went in, and I s'pose had to come aout with the grist. Guess 'twas that made Mr. Paine so complimentary."

"An easy way to let yourself out, Friend Hubbard. You know that sentiment, 'all men are created equal,' which is credited to Mr. Jefferson in the Declaration. I doubt not he took it from Judge Wilson, by whom

I heard it spoke long before. A strong, penetrating mind the Judge has," and the artillery captain added, with a touch of national pride, "he comes of good Scotch ancestry like myself."

They crossed the fields to the foot of Bayard Hill, whose formidable battery commanded the suburbs from this side of the island. Hubbard, who expected to see Colonel Trumbull that evening on an intimation of some special duty, reluctantly declined his friend's invitation to accompany him to the Inclenberg. The reluctance was greater, not merely from the contagion of Hamilton's high spirits, but because of a projected night expedition that was afoot. Colonel Knox, he said, expected to surprise and capture several British officers who were reported as making surreptitious visits to the De Lancey residence on the heights overlooking the Hudson.

This evening the air was cooler than it had been for several nights, and refreshing, after the close streets of the town thronged with soldiers. Hubbard retraced his steps to reach the Bowery Lane, the route by which he had first entered town. The fields, except in the hollows, were dry and parched, with the long drought, but in the fence corners the yellow spears of golden rod swung in clusters, and the sumach along the streams began to show rich maroons and purples.

The Lieutenant was at odds with himself this evening. A tea at the Inclenberg would have been an agreeable diversion. He had never availed himself of the invitation extended him, and the company of Miss



Murray and her friends, not less than the De Lancey expedition, had appealed strongly to his present mood. With the craving of youth at twenty for excitement and change he was suffering from a languor quite unusual, resultant perhaps of the dog-day oppression, or other inscrutable relations of mind and matter.

Where Maiden Lane crosses Nassau Street he paused, catching a glimpse in the distance of the Walton House through a vista of trees. He walked a little way in that direction to the wooden bridge, over a brook that wound from Golden Hill, turning in its course beyond to swell the stream and cascade in the Walton grounds. The country street was lined with blackberry brush on either side. Near at hand a wood-thrush swung in the topmost branches of a gnarled, old cherry, trilling a lullaby, which a cat-bird in the brake was striving his best to imitate.

The picture recalled, somewhat regretfully, in this passing humor, his own country home. Few people were on the street in view, but as Hubbard turned to retrace his steps a groom approached from the direction of the Walton House. He led two horses through the brook to water, instead of crossing the bridge. One of the horses was a handsome black chestnut, and Hubbard's attention as a horseman had only noted that the animal was equipped with side-saddle for a lady, when he became aware of the approach of the rider herself, a little distance behind.

She wore a cool, light gray habit, and carried in one hand a riding whip, walking with that easy, graceful carriage which, even in the growing twilight, he

remembered and identified with the Lady Claremont, and he remained standing on the bridge until she should pass.



CHAPTER XVI.

ON THE GREEN'ICH ROAD.

Lady Claremont paused before reaching the bridge to address a few words to the groom. Jonathan Hubbard, resting with an assumed indifference on the rustic railing of the bridge, felt a quickening pulse as he wondered if the lady would recognize the quondam Express. Her glance lingered an instant, quite long enough for him to detect that gleam of recognition, to which he raised his cocked hat gallantly.

"Is it not Lieutenant Hubbard?" she asked, encouragement in her rich, full voice.

"At your service, Lady Claremont," exclaimed the young officer in delight.

"You remember me!" replied she, with a smile that charmed.

The possibility that he should forget! It did not appear so remarkable that she should know his official title; only an additional proof of that divinity which very young men are liable to hedge about those sovereigns of the other sex, whose mysterious personality, years and experience, absorbs them.

"I have not forgotten the Express, though his advancement hath been rapid," she continued.

"'Tis strange," he admitted naively, "I had been thinking of you as you came up."

"In very truth? Not unpleasant thoughts, I may hope, sir," her eyes turned upon him with a woman's intuitive glance. "I can say that I have heard Lieutenant Hubbard spoken of in high terms by a lady he should know, Mrs. Knox. Is not the evening delightful after the heat? I do not often walk or ride since your soldiers are here, though I love both, but I thought to improve this opportunity with a gallop so far as Green'ich, Sir Peter Warren's place, before dark."

This was a chance in a thousand, and the Yankee Lieutenant never lost opportunities from lack of readiness. He proffered his attendance if Lady Claremont desired to walk part of the distance, knowing that the Warren place was several miles up the island, off the Green'ich Road. "'Twould be no hardship," he insisted, as she hesitated to put him to such a task; "rather a pleasure, as the distance was trifling," and she placed herself under his guidance, directing the groom to await her at the bridge on the Green'ich Road, beyond the Lisperard Meadows.

She had been in town the past week and expected to return home the next day. When staying for several days she was accustomed to have a servant come down by boat, or by horse, from her home on the riverside, the authorities having granted her a permit enabling them to pass the lines. To-night she anticipated a message awaiting her at the house of her friend, the widow of Admiral Sir Peter Warren.



These pleasant confidences placed her escort entirely at ease, causing him to forget for the moment the mysterious incident at the Walton House. Her frankness encouraged a like confidence that was unusual to his Yankee sagacity. But she seemed indeed the acquaintance of a lifetime, to whom it was pleasant to open one's thoughts and aspirations—which flowed freely under the stimulus—so that he wished the walk might extend indefinitely under the starlit canopy. He would have welcomed some formidable obstacle in their path on which he might have experimented his untried sword, with its lion's head, for her sole benefit. But while primitive rocks, glens and coverts still remained on the lower island, quite as when they were discovered, the previous century, they were no longer the retreat of wolves or the red Indian.

"And you met the great Dr. Franklin?" said she.

Hubbard had related the meeting at dinner in Fraunce's Tavern.

"'Tis a source of complete delight to chat for an hour with so charming a philosopher. Have you often seen him since?"

"Only once; the same evening when I delivered the dispatches to General Washington," and he recited, pleasantly, at his own expense, an account of his nap and the awaking.

"You must have been exhausted from that long ride," she said, sympathetically. "Do you think General Washington a great soldier, Lieutenant Hubbard?"

The Lieutenant could not sufficiently express his admiration for the Commander-in-chief. His companion listened with close attention to his words, which convinced him that he had presented an effective portrait, and to an appreciative hearer.

"I doubt not he is an unselfish patriot," she replied, thoughtfully, "but it is his merit as a captain, I fear, that will be put to severe test with tried, British soldiers."

"You know, Lady Claremont, he was tried with them in the French War, and to his credit," replied Hubbard stoutly.

"Ah, yes;—'tis rumored that the French would like much to take part here with the colonies."

"I have no doubt they would willingly lend us aid did we need it," he returned.

"But would the colonies turn to those enemies from whose schemes England so long protected them? Do they not know that France could have but one selfish purpose?"

"They are no longer our enemies," replied Hubbard, who was of a later generation, that had not the former prejudice against the French.

"Yes, that is true," she returned, "and my connections and prejudices are British, you mean—Dr. Franklin was present, did you say, that evening with Washington?"

"When I awoke—yes. Dr. Franklin and a French merchant whom I had also met at dinner, a Monsieur Bonvouloir—"

"Monsieur Bonvouloir?"



"Yes. I had noted a look between them at dinner, and there had nearly been a dispute between the merchant and the Chevalier Conway."

Her start recalled to the Lieutenant that this incident had not before been mentioned by him to any one. But that indiscretion did not appear to him so great—considering the time that had elapsed—as his unintentional reference to Conway, and which, remembering the Walton House interview, he assumed to be the reason of her movement of surprise.

"This Bonvouloir was also present, then, with General Washington and Dr. Franklin?"

"They were discussing a shipment of tobacco," replied the recruit. "You do not know Monsieur Bonvouloir?"

"We were one time passengers together on the same vessel. He is a most entertaining little Frenchman, and has often visited America."

Her reference to Monsieur Bonvouloir as a "little Frenchman" seemed hardly an adequate portrayal of the merchant to Hubbard, who continued with Yankee bluntness:

"And you know the Chevalier Conway?"

"I have known the Chevalier Conway, though I know not whence you could have learned that. I know no good of him."

Her tone indicated that the subject was not pleasant, and her candid acknowledgment disarmed him, filling him with regret that he should have mentioned it. At that point he might have explained, had she pressed the question, giving her the full source of his informa-

tion, but continuing directly, Lady Claremont inquired if he had seen Monsieur Bonvouloir recently, and on his reply that he had not seen him since the night in question, she added that she had been told, only this day, that he was now in the town.

A faint glow of the departed day still hovered above the Jersey heights opposite, but night was fast settling, and in the east, though the moon had risen, it was obscured by a belt of cloud. They found the snow-white beach pleasanter walking than the roadway, from which it sloped away, smooth and hard, to the river. Beyond, through the dusk, the broad waters swept on with the tides, a steel-blue volume, swift, smooth and silent. A cool fragrance, as from the sea, rose from the water, mingling with the still beauty of the night and pervading everything like a spell, arousing new and unknown sensations in the young soldier.

This rapture, not the less interesting from its youth and ardor, his companion, conscious as a woman never fails to be, of an admiration and devotion which she inspires, was pleased to encourage. Hubbard blessed his lucky star that he had not accompanied Hamilton that evening. This led to a mention of his friend, of whom Lady Claremont knew. Incidentally, he told how narrowly he had missed a call at the Inclenberg, and, inadvertently, he made a passing reference to the projected expedition for the capture of the British officers.

"I fear that you greatly regret the loss of that visit," she observed.



"I would as soon have missed a battle as this evening's walk," he replied.

"Colonel De Lancey," she continued, "is a neighbor of mine on the river. I trust he will not rashly expose himself to your friends."

He had given no thought to that at the moment.

"Is it not unfortunate," said she, a sad note in her expressive voice that her escort pondered over, "that we cannot always have our friends as we should like them?"

"Not all your friendships are with the other side, I hope, Lady Claremont?" said Lieutenant Hubbard.

"Not all of them," she echoed, and then: "I wonder if this expedition of which you spoke would prevent my servant from returning home to-night. I hope he may not be arrested."

"You have a permit for him to pass the lines?"

"General Washington has very kindly issued me a special permit."

"I fear that it will not be recognized to-night."

"Oh, then I must keep him at Lady Warren's!"

"I could give you the Commissary password," said the infatuated recruit. "It was issued to-day, and will take him through to-night."

Lady Claremont expressed her appreciation in accepting this generous offer. Before leaving town on the morrow she meant to apply at headquarters for a renewal of her permit, as she intended going up to Fordham Heights for a day. Nothing had yet been heard from her groom, and she began to be concerned

for him, when several voices were distinguished at a little distance.

"That is he," she exclaimed, with relief. "Lieutenant Hubbard, I have enjoyed this pleasant walk more than I can tell you. I feel as if I had long known you."

Lieutenant Hubbard could not express the pleasure this assurance gave him.

"I shall often think of it. No—I will not trouble you to go farther. Thomas is right here. Good-night!"

She was gone. A graceful wave of the hand and the perfume of her presence melted and dissolved in the darkness, leaving him plunged in a deeper gloom where all had been light and fragrance an instant before. His first impulse was to follow her, but he checked this impropriety. The voices indicated that Lady Claremont had joined friends, and the next moment the horses were galloping away.

It only remained for him to turn back, which he presently did, with heaviness of spirit, seeking a bridle path in the vicinity that passed through the Lispenard Meadows, reaching Broad Way Street by a shorter cut.

He pursued this route in deep reverie, that was blended of painful as well as of delicious reflections, to which in the starlight the crickets piped a swelling chorus, and the persistent and strident reiterations of the katydid were not an unpleasant nor a significant accompaniment.

His thoughts lingered upon the incident of the

evening in a species of divine intoxication. Lady Claremont appealed to him as one of the most delightful and wonderful of women; his acquaintance and experience with women had, to be sure, not been large or varied, which did not at the moment occur to him. She moved in a higher atmosphere than other mortals, one purely her own, yet she was free from all consciousness of station. And she was but a young woman! The Lieutenant did not believe that she could be many years his senior. Was it possible that he should see much of her hereafter? He might never meet her again, for in the conflict now at hand all ties were likely to be destroyed.

Such a prospect was a calamity that sent a pang through him. Why had he not thought of some pretext by which he could again see her! He accused himself at the stupid oversight. For the moment even war, to this young warrior was not the exclusive, rose-tinted flame. But youth and love are sanguine and never abandon hope. They ally themselves with the impossible from which often springs the unexpected.

A clatter of horses' feet approaching from behind at a smart pace broke into these speculations. The moon was still obscured, and as the party came on he stepped aside to a clump of trees, whose deeper shadow concealed him, and from which he caught the outline of three riders as they passed on a hard gallop, leaving behind a cloud of dust.

Along with the dust, in a strata of that cloud where the head of the Yankee Lieutenant moved, as he pursued his course, there was left also to his newly



awakened senses a delicate, yet scarcely perceptible fragrance, the scent of which imparted to him a kind of frenzy. He began at once to prance like a restive colt. Then, with a howl of rage, jealousy, or what not, he launched forth in a wild run after the horse-men as fast as his long and athletic legs would carry him.



CHAPTER XVII.

A WARM SCENT.

As a runner Jonathan Hubbard had few equals in speed and bottom. But a man on foot of a dark night is a poor match for galloping steeds. He was handicapped as well by the sword that kept flapping at his side, and finally getting between his legs it threw him sprawling at full length on the road. A violent physical concussion tends to mental reaction, and on regaining his feet he collected his thoughts and proceeded with more deliberation.

At a short distance beyond the path turned into a more traveled road, where a resort known as Corbie's Tavern, not in good repute, was located. In an out-house of the tavern, by the light of a lantern, Hubbard saw a man attending three horses, whose heated condition satisfied him were those he was looking for. Another time he might have been more cautious. The face of the man would have given warning, but personal and official interests were united at this moment in a fermentation that disregarded ordinary precautions.

"When did these horses get in?" he demanded, with authority.

"Ye can tell by ye're eyes," the man replied in a

surly voice, not unfamiliar. The lantern rays showed the features of that Gil Forbes of the fuzzy yellow coat, whose acquaintance the Express had made on his arrival in New York.

"Where are the riders?" repeated Hubbard.

"Follow ye're nose, master, per'aps ye'll find out," was the gruff answer.

Intent on identifying the principals Hubbard rushed to the tavern. The door was ajar and he pushed it open. Two men were seated at a rough table in the flickering light of candles, their pistols before them, and a flask from which they were filling their cups with liquor. They seemed in good humor thus occupied, giving no heed to the approach of Hubbard or the opening of the door.

At a glance he saw that both men wore the uniform of British officers. The elder, of bold and rugged build, was speaking, and he recognized Colonel Simcoe. His companion was a younger man, of animated voice and manner. This abrupt realization of his suspicions took the breath of Lieutenant Hubbard. The significance of the presence of two British officers within American lines was aggravated by its personal offense to him at the moment. With after experience his native readiness would have aided him, but in this crisis he stood irresolute.

"'Tis fortunate we missed the reception, Captain André," remarked Simcoe, raising his cup.

"And more exciting than chasing mosquitoes down in camp," replied the other gaily. "What bloody beasts they have in this country! No wonder these

Yankee rebels are so bloodthirsty—they are inoculated.”

“The rascals were in too great a hurry; but we may bag the little Frenchman yet, and have the play of hare and hounds beside.”

“Provided, my dear Colonel, we be not ourselves bagged. I’ve no notion for a rope’s end, or that sort of glory, even to catch one of Vergennes’ Frenchmen, in which Sir William is so mightily interested;” he continued, humming:

“I fear that he would rue it,
If these rogues did catch the poet.”

“That is villainous doggerel, André. ’Tis enough to bring the whole Yankee army down on us.”

“Doggerel, say you, Simcoe? ’Tis fit company then for hare and hounds. But it’s the full of the moon, and I’ll sing you a sentiment to her eyebrows. Here’s better luck next time.”

They raised their cups, and the face of the younger man being turned to the doorway as he drank, he beheld the sombre cast of Hubbard framed within it, like an ominous ghost at a feast. He drained his cup, bringing it down upon the table with an exclamation that directed his companion’s glance. Simcoe, with an imprecation, seized a pistol, discharging it point blank at the intruder.

Hubbard sprang back, blinking hard at the flash and the report, as the ball buried itself in the oaken door beside his head. It was followed up by an attack from behind, which precipitated a shower of stars

upon his vision, and then darkness as he tumbled over on the porch before the tavern entrance.

"We must git out in no time!" cried the man from the stable, rushing in. "That shot'll fetch a troop down on us. I think I heerd 'em comin'!"

The gallop of horses was distinctly audible through the night, at a distance, and in the uncertainty the British officers discreetly gathered up their effects to follow the man's advice. A rush of feet without interrupted them, and a new-comer sprang upon the porch and stood at the door with drawn sword. The man recoiled, but Captain André promptly whipped out his sword, crossing with a clash that of the intruder.

"Run him out, André!" shouted Simcoe, fiercely. "No time for play."

These directions were more easily given than carried out. Andre smiled gaily, his face lighted with excitement, his eye too intent and watchful of his antagonist to waste breath in reply. The candle light, though a dim illumination, permitted each combatant to follow and anticipate the designs of the other, while Simcoe fumed within.

The new arrival was youthful and slight of stature, but his small, white hand, though delicate as a woman's, was as rigid as steel. His play as the blades crisped, showed an acquaintance with the weapon not inferior to that of the British officer. A ring, in which was set a brilliant gem, flashed from the little finger of the swordsman's hand as it caught the candle rays.

This brilliant object, quite as much as the glitter and clash of steel, first centered the attention of Hubbard



as he lay stretched upon the floor. He struggled to his feet bewildered by the blow he had received, endeavoring to reconcile this turmoil with the presence of his friend Major Aaron Burr. The profile of Burr glowed with the conflict. He parried a thrust, and with a feint, delivered a rapid counter in return that forced his opponent to spring backward to avoid the point. The narrow doorway had disadvantages, but it favored the weaker party, who held his opponents in front.

André's companions chafed with impatience as the tramp of what seemed a squad of horse approaching, could be distinguished above the click of the steel. Warned by this, the lights were suddenly extinguished, and Simcoe, forcing André aside, flung the heavy door shut with a crash in the face of his opponent.

"A dirty, coward trick!" cried Burr, fiercely slapping the door with his sword.

A derisive laugh replied from within as the bar was slipped in the sockets.

The approaching horses were close at hand, and Burr turned hurriedly to his friend.

"Are you badly hurt, Hubbard?" he asked.

"A lump on the head only," returned the Lieutenant.

"Let's get out of this. I don't want to meet any one," said Burr, nervously.

They ran across the road to a thicket, which concealed them while it afforded a full view of the tavern. There had been no time to spare. A dozen horsemen, Virginia dragoons, dashed up and halted at the tavern

entrance as the friends entered the bushes. The moon was getting clear of the belt of cloud, and they could see that most of the party had dismounted, rushing to the house and leaving one or two in charge of the horses. They pounded loudly on the door for an instant, then, bursting through a window, entered in that manner, relighting the candles presently and throwing open the door while they searched the place.

"They're escaping from the back!" said Hubbard, at a sound from the stables.

Major Burr whispered him to be silent, as the searchers, having gone through the house without success, rushed out to the stables. A fresh clue brought them scrambling, with shouts, back to the saddles. In another moment the whole troop was mounted and away in pursuit—the tavern left open and deserted.

Hubbard and Burr entered, finding several guttering candles burning, the light from which showed tables and benches upturned in disorder. By a kind of instinct Hubbard pounced upon a white tuft on the floor—a delicate piece of lace and cambric, exhaling a familiar odor—which he transferred to his pocket without remark, but not unobserved by his companion.

"What prize have you captured?" Burr asked.

"Just a pocket handkerchief one of those fellows dropped."

"Who the devil are they, Hubbard?"

"British officers in our lines."

"How did you run your nose into such a hole?"

"It was that Gil Forbes. You remember that rogue's attack on me?"

"Ah," replied his friend, observing Hubbard intently despite his plausible reply. "I see."

"I saw his face, and ran up against these officers, while following him."

"Dangerous business. I thought you were done for when that pistol flashed in your eyes."

"What good fortune brought you here?" inquired Hubbard.

"There's no more here for us," replied Burr. "Let's leave before any one else turns up." He seemed anxious to get away, Hubbard observed, and added:

"You did me a good turn."

"Honors are easy, Hubbard," Burr continued, as they walked away. He explained that he had been standing under the bushes beside the road when he saw and recognized Hubbard at the tavern entrance.

"You know I am on duty over in Brooklyn. I walked up here with a friend."

"Miss Moncrieffe?" Hubbard knew of but one who would draw Burr so far from Brooklyn. "I thought she had left Richmond Hill?"

"So she has; she is getting some of her effects over there. I fear that I am late for duty at midnight. Will you see her safely to the house, Hubbard?"

His friend readily assented, and Major Burr, directing him to remain silent for an instant, whistled softly the note of a quail. It was answered from an adjoining grove, where a slight human figure was outlined in the moonlight. Burr hastened to meet it, and they joined Hubbard promptly.

"Our old friend, Margie," said he. "I've told her you've been under fire, Hubbard."

And with a hasty embrace Burr tore himself away, leaving Hubbard in charge, and assuring him that this was a service that he never would forget.

"The path is this way, Colonel Hubbard," said the young woman, pressing confidently close to him. Hubbard stood in a kind of abstraction after his friend's departure, his wits not yet wholly adjusted to the rapid succession of incident.

"Are you turned about?" she asked.

"Guess I am twisted a little," replied the Lieutenant, stumbling forward.

His companion's slight and airy figure tripped lightly at his side in a footpath intended only for one. She exerted her efforts in vain to rally him. Under the moonlight in a beauteous landscape, her bright and coy glances upward to the face of her protector might have moved a colder temperament; but presently, as the path emerged into the road at the foot of Richmond Hill, she desisted and ran ahead of her escort.

"I thank you so much for your company, Lieutenant Hubbard," said she. "But don't come farther. I can find my way blindfold, now, though Lady Washington were looking."

"We are not so soon there!" cried he, checking a long and suspicious breath.

"Oh, yes, indeed! But please don't speak so loud."

"I must have been very dull and stupid, Miss Moncrieffe," apologetically.



"'Tis true you have not been so lively as a cricket," replied the maid.

"'Tis my head," returned the Lieutenant, lugubriously. "That ugly rap I caught has left a lump as big as a hen's egg."

"I am so sorry. Didst ever have a rap on the heart—on the heart, Lieutenant Hubbard?"

Her black eyes twinkled mischievously in the moonlight as she dropped a pretty curtsy, tripping with a merry laugh over the road and disappearing on the other side.

"The minx!" he cried aloud. "Surely my head is as hollow as a pumpkin in frost time," and his thoughts went back directly over the evening, and to Lady Claremont. "Colonel Simcoe! A British officer, indeed! He may thank me for a simpleton that he is a British officer still. And she had an appointment for this evening, and for this she came out to the Warren place."

It was not a pleasant conclusion to come to. Lady Claremont's frankness, her gentle and unassuming manner, made it repugnant to think of her as being in collusion with the enemy. That illusive atmosphere in which he had enveloped her, the charm and peculiarity of her position, refused to be dispelled by all doubts. She freely admitted her English friendships. What, then, could be her purpose? And these unaccountable references to Bonvouloir, on whom Simcoe seemed to entertain designs. He tossed back his head in vain. The perplexities continued to rise and multiply. Trin-

ity's clock was striking midnight as he plodded back to headquarters.

Colonel Trumbull had not returned since evening, which relieved him from misgivings on that score. What answer could he make the prying inquiries of his cross-questioning, if once started on the subject? He sought sleep as a solace and answer until the morrow.



CHAPTER XVIII.

OTHER CONFIDENCES AND SURPRISES.

Captain Hamilton's entrance at daybreak aroused Hubbard. Hamilton was in fine humor, though he had not slept during the night, and would be obliged to report for duty within an hour. He was treading on air. Hubbard, he insisted, would never know how much he had missed the previous evening—to which his friend listened, inquiring somewhat listlessly:

"You made your capture, then?"

"My capture? What do you mean?"

"Why the expedition; those British officers you told me of."

"Oh, no. They did not turn up. They must have got the wind."

The failure did not appear to give much concern to Hamilton, but it again brought to Hubbard his previous night's experience. Were not these the same officers whom he had encountered and for whose escape he was responsible? Where was this escapade of his likely to lead to? he asked himself. Hamilton meanwhile continued volubly:

"We remained at the Murrays' until midnight. 'Twas a delightful night, you know, when the moon came up!"—Did he not know to his sorrow?"—"And

what a glorious place is the Inclenberg! When my ship comes in, Hubbard, I'll buy one of these island hills and build my home on it. Then the Murrays are charming people, cultivated, perfectly plain and unassuming. Miss Schuyler, Miss Murray and I spent much of the evening on the grounds. Do you know she is a most remarkable girl, Hubbard?"

"Who, Miss Murray?"

"No, no; Miss Schuyler. Miss Murray is well enough; but you are infernally stupid about women, Hubbard. 'Tis remarkable in a fellow whose perceptions are so quick in other matters."

"Yes, 'tis queer," assented his stupid friend, converting a long breath into a laugh. "What remarkable thing did Miss Schuyler do?"

"You cannot set these things down in a catalogue, man alive! 'Tis the spirit of them. Women have an intuition where men halt and stumble! Miss Schuyler is a strong believer in the justice of our cause, and that it will succeed, and she is so sensible in her enthusiasm. I have sometimes wavered, or feared, but I have never realized so keenly the possibilities of success as in our talk last night. They spoke, too, of you, Hubbard, and were sorry that you could not have come out with me."

"Were they? What did they say?"

"Miss Murray spoke with much favor of you to Lady Claremont."

"To Lady Claremont!" shouted Hubbard, starting up.

"That's what I said. What's the matter?"



"Lady Claremont was not at the Inclenberg?"

"Well, she or her double. There is something most unusual about her, do you know? She came out late with her groom, riding over from Lady Warren's place, intending, I think, to go to her home on the heights; she said something about being obliged to go out to Fordham to-day, but she was prevailed on to remain over night. She is certainly a most interesting and delightful woman."

This was a great deal from a lover who knew of but one woman in existence.

It was a relief to Hubbard to unburden something of his increasing perplexities to his friend. This he did with circumspection, revealing no more of special confidences than he felt was permissible, not even of his own particular concern in Lady Claremont, beyond the interest in meeting her after leaving Hamilton the previous evening. He told of the walk, the British officers, Gil Forbes, and the timely appearance of Major Burr.

Hamilton agreed that this was quite an astonishing adventure. He wondered what could have precipitated "little Burr" into that neighborhood, a clue that Hubbard withheld. Hamilton added that Burr had a reputation for affairs of the heart, and then, reverting to the larger problem, the Warrens, he said, were related to the De Lanceys, Lady Warren having been a De Lancey.

"Are you going to report this affair?" he asked of Hubbard, a question that was agitating the Lieutenant deeply.

"Not unless I am called upon," returned Hubbard.

"I would not," replied his friend. "Neither Burr nor you were on duty. You know Miss Schuyler goes away to-day?" said Hamilton, turning mournfully to the one theme.

"She does? And how did you get on?"

"We had a delightful walk and chat, and she has consented—"

"Ah! you are getting on," interrupted Hubbard.

"She has consented to write."

"Well, that is progress," said his friend, taking leave, "and I must try something in that direction with Colonel Trumbull."

He found the Commissary in a state of mind.

"Hubbard!" cried he, nervously. "Two British officers had our countersign last night. They were chased to Corbie's Tavern. Then they got a boat and escaped."

"They must have been the men Colonel Knox was after. Captain Hamilton has just been telling me about them," replied the Lieutenant, and he repeated to himself: "She gave them the countersign."

"I know it," returned his chief. "I'd rather catch that danged spy who gives out our countersign than both the officers. I'd string him up and fill him with daylight, by Godfrey!"

Hubbard was discreetly silent, and Colonel Trumbull's choler having subsided, he explained that the plans for the capture of these officers the previous evening had prevented his return to the office. General Washington, he continued, wished to see Hubbard immediately on his arrival at headquarters.

While waiting Hubbard took a turn up Broad Way Street to collect his thoughts. He was oppressed with the sense of his indiscretion, and his personal responsibility for the escape of the British officers. Even more serious consequences might result through Lady Claremont's relations with the enemy. In no other way could he consider her dealings with Colonel Simcoe. There was evidently a premeditated design against Bonvouloir the Frenchman, to which she was a party.

A deep bitterness was now associated with his recollections of the previous night. This intricate web of circumstance into which he had thrust himself seemed to be involving him in its meshes. He clenched his teeth at the thought that he had been made a convenient tool, even by a woman whose personality had exerted such a charm upon him. It was quite plain, as Colonel Trumbull had intimated, and as he might have seen from the start at the East Chester Tavern, that her purpose, whatever it might be, was unfriendly to American interests. Notwithstanding all which, and although his self-esteem and patriotism were touched in a sensitive spot, the Lieutenant could not bring himself to the conclusion that he should denounce her.

"You're climbing up Fool's Hill, Jonathan, and you don't know enough to face about," he addressed himself in the revulsion that had come with the reaction.

Having in the course of these reflections reached and crossed the Commons, he retraced his steps. Passing St. Paul's, he saw that a soldier was holding the great

white stallion of the Commander-in-chief in front of the chapel. It was the frequent practice of Washington to attend early service there, and Hubbard, changing his own purpose, entered the church.

A slim congregation, chiefly of officers and soldiers, partly filled the seats. Washington, who had evidently just entered, was seated forward in one of the high-backed pews, his head still bent in reverence. As he took up the prayer book a woman entered the chapel. She passed down the centre aisle, taking a seat on the opposite side. Hubbard started, half in doubt if her presence were real, when he saw that she was the Lady Claremont.

The services were simple. The soft light filtering through the stained windows, and the voice of the rector breaking upon the quiet atmosphere had a subduing influence of which Hubbard had never before been conscious. His clerical robes gave the minister a mysterious official sanction, to which the responses of the congregation, the Commander, and Lady Claremont, and the chant of the singers, added a deeper impressiveness. To the Lieutenant it seemed that the services had an especial significance this Sunday morning of a summer drawing to its close, in a city that might at any moment become the seat of bitter strife and war.

Hubbard passed out in advance, noting Lady Claremont's dark chestnut steed held by the groom in front of the chapel. The white charger of the Chief, at a little distance, arched his strong neck and struck the ground proudly with his forefoot, at which the chest-

nut reared her head, the muscles and veins on the long, slender body and clean limbs standing out in ridges.

Lieutenant Hubbard walked to the foot of Bowling Green and around Fort George before returning to the Kennedy House. General Washington had arrived, but was at the moment occupied. Presently the door was opened by the Commander himself, accompanying the Lady Claremont to the street. The bearing of Washington was marked with great deference. Her glance as she replied to him struck a chord that vibrated within the Yankee Lieutenant. He moved away, not without hearing their words:

"The permit, madam, will continue to give you and your household protection, and passage within our lines on the island."

Her reply was only partly audible, and Washington continued:

"I appreciate your interest, madam. My latest advices confirm these movements, whatever may be the intentions of Sir William Howe."

He attended her to the street, where her steed of the previous night was in waiting. Placing one foot in the firm hand of Washington she sprang lightly into the saddle, returning his salute with a graceful obeisance as she galloped away.

Hubbard recalled that she had spoken the previous night of applying for a renewal of her permit, and the distrust that had arisen within him vanished at sight of her again. Nevertheless he determined that he would reveal to the Commander-in-chief his suspicions of her, even at the risk of his own censure.

A hand was laid upon his shoulder, and the dour visage of the Commissary bent over and whispered in his ear:

"Where have they come from?"

Hubbard replied that he had seen General Washington and Lady Claremont at the chapel services.

"Keep an eye on her. I told Washington I'd put no trust in any of them weemin."

Colonel Trumbull took himself at once into his own quarters, and Washington, returning, entered his apartment with a firm, springing tread, crossing to the desk, on which an open map was spread.

With youthful reverence of physical strength the Lieutenant could not fail to admire his supple and muscular movement of limb. The features of the Commander-in-chief wore an animated expression in contrast with his usual reserve. His thoughts occupied, Hubbard's presence was not observed until a movement made it known. Washington then looked up and greeted him pleasantly.

"I did not know that any one was in the room," he said.

"I had just entered, your Excellency. Colonel Trumbull directed me to report."

"Were you not to report last evening?" Washington inquired, his large gray eyes resting on the Lieutenant, who explained that Colonel Trumbull had been occupied.

"Did Colonel Trumbull say what I wanted?"

"Only that it was a matter of importance."

The thoughts of the Commander were apparently much engrossed; he picked up from the table a lump of maple sugar, having a fondness for sweets, sampling it with satisfaction.

"You make a great deal of this tree sugar up in the Hampshires?" he observed.

On this topic the Lieutenant was quite as well informed as on that of wild cherries. He replied readily to the General's questions as to what quantities might be secured to supply the army; its probable cost, and other information. Washington, partly from his agricultural inclinations and from other suggestions, appeared to listen closely, but he inquired abruptly, as Hubbard paused:

"You have never been under fire, Lieutenant Hubbard?"

"I've had a bullet whistle within an inch or two of my head," replied the officer promptly, recalling the baptism of the previous night.

"Quite close enough," returned the Chief. "I once thought it pleasant music. But 'tis good to have it further away, and often shows better judgment and discretion. I shall want you to take orders to-night for General Clinton, in Yonkers. He is to forward me all the troops he can spare without delay. Also to gather up such boats as he may lay hold of, which you are to take in charge, with what help you need, and push down the river at once to Spuyten Duyvil. At high tide you can get through, just before it turns, without trouble, to the Haerlem at Kings Bridge.

You will hold the boats there until you get orders direct from me."

Hubbard's pulses beat high at this prospect, which meant active service so near at hand, as well as the confidence that the mission implied. Washington referred to the map before him as he talked. He continued, slowly, his eyes resting searchingly on the young officer:

"The dispatches will explain all this to General Clinton. There will be a detachment of Marblehead boatmen of Colonel Glover's command waiting for you to-morrow night at Spuyten Duyvil, under Corporal Cotton, a reliable man whom you may trust. General Mifflin, at Kings Bridge, will give you more aid if you need it. But you will have the sole care and responsibility for these craft, to hold them against the enemy, and to sink them rather than let them be captured, and to turn them over to no one except on my written order. Is that quite clear?"

Lieutenant Hubbard expressed his perfect understanding of these instructions.

"You can notify me as soon as the boats are secure on the Haerlem, and wait further orders. At that point I think they will be fairly safe for the time, from the British; and they may be quickly dispatched to Fort Lee, or to any other point on the Jersey shore. There is another matter——"

A loud and hasty knock at the door interrupted them, and it was opened precipitately by Adjutant Reed of Philadelphia who entered with a group of officers. Reed, a tall and stately officer of about

thirty years, by virtue of his confidential relations with the Commander-in-chief, had access to him at all times. He attached no small importance, Hubbard thought, to these relations, and, by implication, the weight of State that rested upon his own shoulders. On this occasion his manner, and that of the others showed unusual concern.

"Pardon the interruption, General," he exclaimed with suppressed excitement; "but it is urgent, and affairs are pressing."

Washington looked up, his face assuming that reserved expression, which was habitual, as he waited for Colonel Reed to continue. That officer paused with a glance at Hubbard, who had stepped aside for him. Washington indicated that he might proceed, while Hubbard could remain.

"There is positive information, your Excellency," said Adjutant Reed, "that the British are landing on Long Island beyond the Narrows."

"Do you think it may not be a ruse, Colonel Reed?" asked Washington.

"'Tis Howe's entire force, there can be no doubt, sir."

"Have you late word from General Green, Colonel Duer?" Washington asked turning to that officer.

"He was still weak with fever this morning though he tried to leave the bed," Colonel Duer replied.

"I have no doubt, General," resumed Colonel Reed, "that Howe will move directly on our Brooklyn lines, to secure the heights. It was General Lee's opinion——"

"Where did you say they were landing?" asked Washington.

"Near to what they call Coonie Island, or Gravesend."

"Pray God it may prove a Gravesend to them," observed Colonel Harry Knox in a sepulchral bass which relieved the more serious tension, and the Commander-in-chief without comment or relaxation of features, cast a grateful glance to the artillery officer.

"The report confirms our advices which you will see I have marked on this map, gentlemen," continued Washington; "though Howe may still intend to land other troops above us on the Hudson. It is reported that he began the transfer of his troops, yesterday. His force will hardly be ready to move before to-morrow, or next day, but I have already notified General Putnam, and I would like you to report to him at once, Colonel Reed, with all information that you may have. Colonel Knox, how soon can you transport your command over to Brooklyn?"

"It can be done in three hours; by noon, at any rate."

"Start at once, and further instructions will await you on the other side."

Washington turned to Hubbard when the officers had departed, his manner now different and more formal, than the familiar bearing of the early interview.

"This is the 26th of the month, Mr. Hubbard," said he. "I shall expect to hear from you with the boats all secured in the Haerlem, not later than the morning of the 28th. You are not to start from town, however, before midnight."



The Lieutenant repeated his understanding of these directions.

"On leaving here you will go directly to "The Grapevine," the tavern on Broad Way Street beyond the Common, and inquire for a French merchant who is stopping there, a Monsieur Bonvouloir."

Hubbard's movement was so marked that Washington paused until the Lieutenant explained that he had met the merchant on the night of his arrival in New York, at Fraunce's Tavern. At that moment he would have added that he had been told the previous night of Monsieur Bonvouloir's presence in town, a neglect which thereafter he regretted, and which, at that time, might have changed much the course of this history. But the Commander-in-chief continued with the faintest presence of a smile:

"You saw him also later the same night, which, I trust, you have not repeated."

The Lieutenant again deferred his statement.

"Monsieur Bonvouloir does not wish his presence in New York known on several accounts. He will accompany you to-night, and you can fix the hour with him. Corporal Cotton of whom I spoke to you, will be waiting with a boat at the landing near the Farm House and Tavern, opposite Fordham Heights, so that you need not go to Kings Bridge. On the other side of the river 'tis a short walk to the Van Cortlandt homestead where horses will be waiting."

He gave to Hubbard a packet for General Clinton, adding further precautions on both missions, and suggesting, as his glance rested on the Lieutenant,

in something of his former manner. "'Twould be better, perhaps, that you wear a plain and less conspicuous uniform on this service."



CHAPTER XIX.

THE FRENCH MERCHANT.

"The Grapevine," a low, vine-covered frame structure, sat back a little from the roadway—which was the termination of Broad Way Street*—amid a cluster of trees with open fields on all sides. A painted sign of mammoth grape clusters hung over the gate, with the name of Alphonse Billet. Billet had planted the vineyard after the manner of his native France, and had secured for the wines of his own make, in addition to the produce of a vegetable garden, a local reputation, that brought to his house a select custom from the town.

Lieutenant Jonathan Hubbard, his patriotism fired anew at the near prospect of long-delayed action, walked briskly up Broad Way Street from the Bowling Green, head aloft and shoulders erect. The important duty assigned to him banished for the time all other sentiment, including the lately-formed resolution to relate the previous night's adventure to the Commander-in-chief. It was now too late, he concluded,

*At that time, General Hubbard remarks in the journal there was a stone fence crossing the present street, and an opening by a lane into private grounds was, until a few years before his writing (1825), closed with bars.

or, at any rate, with a toss of the head throwing regrets behind, it would keep—and he was already at the “Grapevine.”

The wiry figure of Monsieur Billet appeared in front of the house as he approached, and a passing glimpse of another figure, that disappeared within the vines, he took for granted was the French merchant. M. Billet extended a polite welcome, urging him to be seated and to partake of a glass of wine, but to Hubbard's surprise, when he had declined this urgent invitation, and expressed a wish to see Monsieur Bonvouloir, the little Frenchman replied, with a shrug of the shoulders:

“I am ver sorry, but Monsieur has been misinform.”

“Do you mean that he has gone?” cried the young man, his confidence shaken.

“I hav not ze plasir to know ze gentilman,” M. Billet replied, with another shrug.

“But I saw him on the porch,” the Lieutenant was about to insist, when native caution intervened. Plainly the Frenchman was lying. He could see that in the twinkle of his small black eyes, and in wrinkles about his mouth. There was doubtless some particular reason for this persistent denial.

“A tall, handsome man, about thirty?” said he.

“Zare ees no such personne,” replied M. Billet with gentle indulgence.

“I'm awful sorry to trouble you,” returned the recruit, with a movement to leave.

“Eef ze getilman come, I shall gif ze word zat you say?”

"Much obleeged, Mr. Billet," said Hubbard, with Yankee nasal inflection. "It's no account."

Monsieur Billet followed him to the door.

"Eef Monsieur will say ze name—"

"He would not know me. I came from headquarters, from General Wash—"

"Ah, Monsieur le Capitain! Come!" interrupted the Frenchman.

He led the way to the rear of the cottage, where the French merchant sat in a shaded retreat, a book in hand and several others at his side. "How these Frenchmen are given to lying!" the Lieutenant observed to himself.

Monsieur Bonvouloir looked more martial, it seemed to his visitor, as he tossed back his long locks, and more youthful. He greeted the young soldier, whom he recognized at once, with a charm of manner that greatly impressed him, listening to the purpose of his call, when M. Billet had withdrawn, attentively, but as though it were anticipated. Hubbard added that he would be ready to start at any time that might be fixed, having only to complete his few preparations and secure horses. The merchant replied that there were two horses at the house in his service, and as the moon was well up before midnight, they could take advantage of it. He volunteered no further information, insisting only that Hubbard should return to dine with him, when they could talk over their plans.

The Lieutenant retraced his steps, making known to Colonel Trumbull that he would be absent for several days. Then he arranged his own effects, carefully

laying aside his new uniform and resuming the gray homespun he had brought from Boston. Hamilton had not returned, and he recalled that General Knox was to take his command to Brooklyn. The afternoon being then well advanced he made his way back to the tavern.

His first excitement having subsided he reviewed his instructions more deliberately. The interest taken by the Commander-in-chief in the French merchant, and the secrecy attending his movements, of which Hubbard had come by accident to know even more than appeared on the surface, made it probable that his vocation was assumed. While there were rumors at this time in the air of a French alliance, the colonies had not yet reached a period when it was considered desirable or necessary. To Hubbard it became more clear that the merchant was the medium of some communication with the French government.

The comments of the English officers on the previous evening had a special significance in this light. Could it be that their references were meant for Monsieur Bonvouloir? Was it not more likely they were directed to Billet, who answered the description of a "little Frenchman!" The term plainly did not apply to Monsieur Bonvouloir. Yet, this did not explain the same characterization that had been made by Lady Claremont, who had known the merchant. She knew of his presence in town, a secret which was supposed to be known only to a few persons.

Might it not be that these references were applied to different persons by some coincidence? The attempt

of Simcoe might be repeated that very night. At any rate, it would be well to inform the merchant something of his suspicions, so far as he could, without compromising either himself or Major Burr in the affair of the previous evening. Further complications were not now probable, however desirous General Howe might be of taking a French emissary. But it would be as well to be prepared in advance for an unexpected turn of affairs. The information might also lead to a farther knowledge of Lady Claremont, a subject which, though forced aside, was yet uppermost in the mind of the Lieutenant.

As he approached the tavern, occupied with these reflections, his outer senses alert from habit, Hubbard observed the figure of a man crouching closely to the ground beside the bank of a brook, at a little distance from the house. His actions appeared suspicious, and seeing that he was observed the man turned to run. Hubbard sprang from the road with the impulse and overtook him. He was a rough-looking fellow, but seeing that he was apprehended, he stopped, touching his hat with an obsequious grin, in reply to Hubbard's demand of what he was lurking there for.

"Gittin' a few cress, sir. Don't tell old Billet, wull ye? It makes him mad."

The explanation was so plausible that Hubbard turned away without further words and the man grinned harder behind his back.

Monsieur Bonvouloir proved a most agreeable gentleman, not so many years the senior of the Lieutenant, despite the gray that tinted his hair at the temples.

Hubbard, with his quick sense of merit and intelligence in others, felt that he had never met with one of such varied and interesting accomplishments as the merchant. He had traveled and read widely, was a close observer, and open and vivacious in conversation, save that even in the midst of an amusing incident his smile retained a trace of melancholy. This served to kindle a sympathetic sentiment in his listener, whose experience of the past twenty-four hours had awakened many new and unfathomed emotions.

As the evening advanced M. Billet spread an appetizing meal, that would have aroused the envy of Sam Fraunce, in a rear apartment of the house. Here there was a refreshing breeze, and the recruit, warmed by a glass of wine, became communicative and patriotic. The French merchant, it appeared, knew of the recent landing of the British. He believed that an important crisis in the fortunes of the colonies was approaching. And presently the Yankee Lieutenant became conscious that his own part of the conversation was largely in response to the inquiries of the merchant. As this was contrary to his New England proclivities, he began at once a strategic endeavor to turn the tables, but to little purpose.

Monsieur Bonvouloir showed great interest in all that related to the efforts of the colonies, and to American life and customs, but he was reserved and non-committal in what concerned himself. He avoided or diverted any admission in that direction with a dexterity and tact that Hubbard could not fail to recognize and admire. When at last, having brought his

inquiries to the point, he asked if his host was acquainted with Lady Claremont, the merchant replied so frankly he had not this pleasure, that Hubbard felt constrained to believe him. Bonvouloir expressed no farther interest in the lady. His guest did not feel called upon to state his knowledge of her acquaintance with the merchant, but presently he observed:

"I heard only yesterday, Monsieur Bonvouloir, of your return to New York."

"You did hear yesterday?" repeated the merchant. "But you did not see General Washington until this morning?"

"I did not," replied Hubbard, taking warning, "but I heard it before seeing him."

"From whom did you hear it?" demanded Bonvouloir, promptly.

Hubbard had become aware that he was treading on delicate ground, and that more was involved in his admission than he had anticipated.

"It was Colonel Trumbull who instructed me to report to General Washington," he replied, with a candor that would have done credit to Monsieur Billet.

"Ah! the General had then told him," said the merchant, with apparent relief. "You surprised me, as there are reasons why my visit here should not be known."

Hubbard's thoughts reverted to the man searching for cresses, and again to those curious references to "the little Frenchman" in his last night's adventure. Did they not verify his suspicions of a design on Monsieur Bonvouloir of which it was a duty to inform him?

He might do this, he decided, without any reference to Lady Claremont.

The merchant had refilled their glasses while his guest was coming to this decision, and Hubbard stooped to pick up from the floor the pocket handkerchief he had dropped in the moment's abstraction. It was his memento of the previous evening. In the act of replacing it in his pocket the Frenchman sprang from his chair with an impetus that sent it backward on the floor. His hand gripped the shoulder of Hubbard like a vise.

"Where did you get that?" he demanded, in a voice husky with suppressed emotion.

The blood rushed to his face, and his eyes blazed fiercely as he repeated the demand.

Hubbard flushed with surprise as he turned to the questioner, which appeared to recall his companion to himself. He staggered back against the wall in an effort at control. Then, resuming his chair, he exclaimed with what was almost a groan!

"*Mon Dieu!* Pardon me, my friend. I am an idiot." He drank off the contents of his glass, refilled it and called to Billet for fresh bottles. "You will bear with me, Monsieur Hubbard," he continued, resuming with an effort his former manner, "I owe you an explanation and an apology."

"Do not speak of it," said his guest, with an intuitive fellow feeling.

"Ah!" said Monsieur Bonvouloir, with forced gaiety. "Would you permit me to look at the mouchoir?"

Hubbard handed it to him with misgivings, but

Monsieur Bonvouloir returned the dainty lace fabric with no further demonstrations.

"Strange!" he muttered, half aloud. "So many years, and so far distant—the same fragrance!"

He refilled Hubbard's glass and his own, urging his guest to drink, and setting the example.

"Men are great fools, Lieutenant Hubbard," continued the merchant, philosophically. "Take the advice of an older fool, and never trust your sweetheart out of sight. Listen to the experience of a dear friend of mine in France."

The reserve of Monsieur Bonvouloir had vanished, and in its place there was an enforced calmness through which at moments a reckless gaiety seemed ready to break, as Hubbard attended with profound interest to his narrative.

"My friend was betrothed to a young and beautiful girl. He thought her an angel pure and true as any in heaven, because he was a fool and did not know women. His relatives were opposed to their marriage, but they had loved each other for several years, and the death of his parent came to solve the difficulty. He was obliged to leave her for a time, after they had exchanged such pledges as only lovers can. Did she wait for him? you ask. Ah, he returned at the first moment, after a few short weeks—long enough to him—to find that she had so soon forgotten. She had deserted him for a stranger. *Sacre Dieu!* There was devotion for you."

"Did she leave no word?" asked the young officer, deeply affected by this simple romance, no less by the

identity of the speaker, whose emotion was so thinly disguised.

"Ah, yes! She asked him to forgive and to forget her."

"Perhaps there was a mistake," ventured Hubbard, with a young lover's optimism.

"A mistake of loving too well. My friend went mad for weeks, poor fool."

"Did he never see her again?"

"To see her would have been to ask her pity. She had left him for another. Fill your glass and drink, Lieutenant."

But Hubbard drank with more caution. He was strangely fascinated with this tale, and the transformation it had effected in the bearing of Monsieur Bonvouloir. His resolve to repeat the information he had gained in last night's episode, was now fixed. He waited the opportunity when his host should have become more calm.

While the merchant was still talking M. Billet had been heard expostulating in front of the house, to loud and emphatic demands for entrance. These had now become violent, and Hubbard sprang to his feet with excitement at the sounds. The crisis had come. His fears were well founded and he called a warning to Monsieur Bonvouloir as the voices grew louder.

"Stand aside, man, or I'll stand you on your head!" threatened one of the voices.

Its tones were familiar, though pitched so that he could not place them. The next moment the party had

made entrance to the house, and were advancing through the rooms.

"What the devil are you trying to hide, Billet?" said the voice. "We're hungry, I say, and we've smelled your baked meats for a mile. Ha, ha! Look at this little private party, Major."

The speaker who paused at the threshold to look in upon them was the Chevalier Conway; Major Aaron Burr stood beside him. Conway's features were flushed and a mocking smile accompanied his exaggerated salute. Major Burr opened his eyes wide at sight of Hubbard and the French merchant, but he apologized and endeavored to turn his companion away. Conway, though at other times never deficient in breeding, was assertive and overbearing when in drink.

"These are your sick guests, Billet?" he exclaimed. "How long since you turned your house into a private hospital? By Gad! Hubbard, you damned, sly Yankee Express, what are you up to now?"

CHAPTER XX.

THE COLLECT POND.

The French merchant had arisen at the entrance of the party, all traces of his recent emotion having disappeared as he greeted the arrivals politely. Monsieur Billet, behind, wrung his hands in dismay, looking from the merchant to the unbidden guests; and Hubbard, with remembrance fresh of the late excitement, felt an ominous foreboding of the consequences.

"Why do you not place seats, Alphonse?" said Monsieur Bonvouloir. "Will you not, Monsieur le Chevalier, and your friend partake with us a glass of wine?"

So courteous an invitation Conway showed no hesitation in accepting, a recognition that he regarded due from a bourgeois French merchant to an officer of military repute. M. Billet had filled the glasses from fresh bottles when the merchant, raising one to the light, exclaimed with a slight frown, turning upon the host:

"Alphonse, have you not made a mistake?"

"O Monsieur," replied Billet with a guilty look.

"I never drink this wine, or have it served my guests."

"It was the haste, Monsieur," replied the embarrassed host.

"Gentlemen, you will pardon a moment's delay."

The condemned bottles were quickly removed, and the glasses filled from others which were satisfactory, calling forth the commendation of the Chevalier Conway, who vowed that he had never been served with this wine, and who was impressed with the host's recognition of the merchant's authority.

"It is a special importation, Monsieur le Chevalier," said the merchant.

"'Tis very good for this country, Monsieur Bonvouloir."

"If you approve, Monsieur, I shall be pleased to supply you in America."

"We shall see, Bonvouloir. By Gad! I never forget good wine or fine women. What vile stuff they call wine at Fraunce's. So you are also a wine merchant, Monsieur?"

"Wine and tobacco, Monsieur."

"A good combination. An' you are a good judge, like all Frenchmen."

The merchant bowed his thanks, and Conway, refilling his glass added:

"Are you entering the wine trade, Hubbard, that you put aside your fine uniform?"

The Lieutenant knew that Major Burr, who drank moderately, was closely scrutinizing him, but the merchant spoke.

"Colonel Trumbull has permitted Monsieur Hubbard to direct me to Boston."

"Well, here's luck and a pretty penny." Conway tossed off his glass.

The docility with which the merchant accepted the patronage of Colonel Conway was an astonishment to Hubbard, whose schooling in such matters was yet that of a novice. Conway, to make amends for his own consideration, did ample justice to the choice grape, with no need of urging by Monsieur Bonvouloir. The fresh fuel made no improvement in his bearing; his arrogance becoming more marked and outspoken. But his allusions were either overlooked or turned aside by the merchant, until the Lieutenant blushed, and wondered if this could indeed be the same individual who, an hour since, had displayed such profound sentiment and valor.

Conway presently reverted to French topics, venting his spleen in a tirade on various personages of the French court. An allusion to the Count de Vergennes brought a perceptible flush to the face of the Frenchman, and a stiffening of manner that was noted by both young men. A second reference caused him to interrupt the speaker, though in quiet tones.

"Pardon, Monsieur Conway," said he, "the Count de Vergennes is my friend."

"Your friend, Bonvouloir? Do you supply him with wine or tobacco?"

"The Count de Vergennes has often taken wine at my table, Monsieur."

"And paid you a handsome profit for the privilege, I'll swear."

The flash from the Frenchman was too marked to escape notice, but having reached the quarrelsome

stage Conway rejected an attempt of Major Burr to divert him.

"Monsieur Conway has been offended by the Count de Vergennes?"

"Pardieu! Monsieur Tobacco Merchant, what do you know of an offense between gentlemen?" returned Conway. "Are you a diplomat also, as well as a soldier? 'Twas you who said that Charles Lee was no soldier, because he would not fight behind logs."

The French merchant made no reply except to urge Major Burr and Hubbard to fill their glasses, while Conway continued:

"Begad, we'll show these Yankees how to fight presently! There'll be a bout with those greasy British hirelings ere the week is out, I warrant. Do you listen to me, Monsieur Wine Merchant?"

"Monsieur is very interesting."

"Eh! I will show you a trick on these Dutch Englishmen, better than getting behind logs. *Sacre!* And your Virginia tobacco merchant shall have a lesson in strategy, as well."

"Monsieur is amusing," repeated the merchant gently with an unpleasant smile.

"Amusing!" repeated Conway, with tipsy gravity, steadying himself. "Bonvouloir, your cursed impudence at Fraunce's—"

"Monsieur le Chevalier recalls a fable," said the merchant, nervously twirling his glass.

"Damn your fables!" returned Conway. "Vergennes, I say, is an imbecile!"

"There was once," Monsieur le Bonvouloir contin-

ued, disregarding the interruption, "a poor man who had a donkey—what you call an ass—that he fed from the door of his hut. One day the donkey put his head in the hut, and then his long ears and his shoulders, and presently his feet. He would soon have taken all of the hut if the poor man had not caught the ass by the nose and turned him out."

Conway, though far in his cups, could not mistake this, but he stared for a moment at the speaker before struggling to his feet with an imprecation. Then collecting himself:

"Bonvouloir," said he, unsteadily, "I think I shall have to horsewhip you—"

"Pardon, Monsieur," replied the Frenchman, also rising, "you will not have me throw you out of the window, a buffoon who drinks my wine!"

Hubbard and Burr labored vainly to pacify them. The Celtic blood of Conway was at fever heat, and the impulsive Frenchman's anger glowed under an enforced courtesy. To Conway's threats he expressed a willingness to accommodate him.

"A French officer only meets with his equals," Conway replied, with show of dignity.

"Alphonse will tell the Chevalier I come of as good family as his own," the French merchant returned.

"You shall hear from me to-morrow, Monsieur Bonvouloir!" said Conway, straightening himself with an effort. "Major Burr, are you ready?"

"To-morrow will be too late. I leave to-night," returned the merchant.

"Ah, I thought you wanted a meeting!"

"It is bright moonlight, Monsieur can see."

"Agreed! What shall it be?"

"It is for Monsieur to decide."

"Swords, then; but you gain no advantage, Monsieur Bonvouloir."

"Thanks, Monsieur. I too have practice. Alphonse, is there not a quiet spot near the pond? I drink your health, gentlemen."

Hubbard urged once more the risk of the meeting, but Bonvouloir replied that it could not be helped. If he were hurt a horse would be ready and Hubbard should go on at once, as Alphonse would care for him. Burr had no better influence with Conway, who pushed out of the house, drawing a long draught of fresh air, and following Billet with a swaying motion of the shoulders. They took a narrow path from the garden in the rear of the house, that led through a stone wall to the fields beyond.

In the moonlight Hubbard thought he detected a figure crouching in the shadow of a thicket beside the wall, but on approaching it he discovered only an old hat on the ground.

A few minutes' walk through the open fields down a hollow, brought them to a secluded grove on an inlet of the Collect Pond. The moonlight flooded an open space by the shore of the pool, and the yellow, round disc of the moon was mirrored in the black waters. Around the inlet, except at this open space, a heavy growth of underbrush and timber grew close to the water's edge, the mass of foliage giving a darker background to the setting. A screech owl sent out a wild

cry into the night from the thicket with a chorus of deep-throated bull-frogs from the lake.

"A ghoulisn hole this as a tomb," muttered Burr. "There's no bottom to the pond I'm told. Who the devil is this Frenchman, Hubbard?"

Hubbard, watching the opponents with a strange fascination, did not choose to hear. Conway, much sobered, stood in his shirt sleeves, a firm figure, well knit, as he tested a blade to his satisfaction from a pair brought by Billet, and strove with evident curiosity to make out the bearings on the sword handle.

"Is it here you keep your frog preserves, Monsieur Billet?" he inquired gaily. "What arms are these on the sword hilt?"

"I am quite ready, Chevalier," spoke his opponent, with a salute.

"Begad," said Conway, scanning his figure with respect, "I should like to know you better after I have punctured your wine skin."

Conway had a powerful wrist, a quick, trained eye, and a category of resources that had carried him through a score of similar meetings for which the wink of an eye, the twist of a phrase, offered less pretext than the present occasion. His lighter humor had returned, and the swagger in his bearing was less marked.

Both opponents showed to advantage in the moonlight. The quiet self-possession of the Frenchman was as pronounced as the confidence of his adversary. Their sword points clung with a tender hissing like young serpents as they crossed. A quick thrust by

Conway was parried when it seemed almost to have buried itself in the other's breast, tearing the ruffled shirt front!"

"A touch!" smiled Conway triumphantly.

"Barely," returned Bonvouloir, warding off a succession of feints with which his adversary followed up the first success, with a deftness that placed his skill beyond question. An exposure on Conway's part was seized so promptly that all his resources were required to counter. The Frenchman's reach was long and sure, coupled with youth and endurance that his opponent could no longer claim in the same degree. The exertion already told on Conway's breathing; he could take no chances, and with chagrin he forced the fighting recklessly, leaving another opening from which he escaped with a scratch on the arm.

"Nothing!" he exclaimed fiercely, as Bonvouloir stepped back. "Defend yourself!"

In his anger, and with his second wind, he pressed upon the Frenchman with the fierce onset and fury that usually carried him through, beating down his adversary's guard and forcing him back from one position to another. But in the triumph of this rush Conway suddenly sprang backward with a loud shout. He held up his sword by the blade in the moonlight, scanning the hilt, and then hurled it from him so that it fell point downward into the dark lake waters.

They at first thought him hurt, although neither Burr nor Hubbard had detected the thrust, and Bonvouloir, with his sword still raised, paused at a few paces.

"I am an Irish gentleman," said Conway, folding his arms and bracing his heels firmly in the turf, "and it may be as you have said this evening, Monsieur, I am an ass. Let no one else speak it; but I will not fight the house of La Rourie, from which I have had many good services."

Monsieur Bonvouloir saluted and sheathed his sword, while Conway surveyed him anew, and with close interest.

"Alphonse will give you aid, Monsieur," said the French merchant.

"Begad!" said Conway, "that was no bourgeois play. Who the devil are you?"

"Pardon, Monsieur, I should have to kill you if I told."

Billet rolled back the sleeve from Conway's arm to the shoulder. The scratch was slight, but Conway's face was pale and the blood was sprinkled on his ruffled shirt front.

"You will excuse Lieutenant Hubbard and myself," said Monsieur Bonvouloir.

"*Au revoir!* Monsieur le Bonvouloir," replied Conway, with a bow, straightening and steadying his figure against Major Burr as his late opponent turned away.



CHAPTER XXI.

TO FORDHAM BY MOONLIGHT.

Before reaching the house Hubbard and M. Bonvouloir were overtaken by Billet, who led them to the horses which he had previously made ready for their night's ride. Bonvouloir examined carefully the priming of the pistols in the holsters, informing Hubbard that he would find weapons in his saddle.

"There are those," he added, "who would like to know that we ride out at this hour, but they will hardly lie awake to watch for us."

The reference to a chance of trouble recalled once more Hubbard's apprehensions, and while he put them aside, he kept an eye alert for any warrant. Billet rode ahead, skirting the Hollow where the pond lay. Glimpses of it were caught, and faintly through the night came the distant croaking of the bullfrogs. They followed a bridle path, which shortly turned into the Boston Post Road, where Billet left them.

The moon now stood well over the hills on the Jersey shore, with a great yellow circle in the sky encompassing it. On the horizon back of the hills the lightning flashes showed masses of thunder cloud rising rapidly. Monsieur Bonvouloir had become more constrained and unresponsive. He appeared to derive

a melancholy pleasure in contemplating the threatening aspect and weird beauty of the night, but with a brief reply to some passing comment of his companion he would relapse again into a deep silence.

At this hour the island slept, and not a patrol crossed their path. From the batteries on the water front to the east of the Post Road a light was now and then visible, and to the north in the lonely descent of McGowan's Pass, the farm cottages in Haerlem lay quiet in the moonlight; but as they climbed the heights beyond, the tramp and the voices of the pickets were audible, and the rumble of thunder became more distinct.

The breeze died away, but freshened again as they neared the summit of the heights on Breakneck Hill, and the entire cleft of the Haerlem, with its steep, rocky and wooded sides, extending north and south, was below them. Hubbard could distinguish the house on the flats beyond, which was his landmark, and near it a landing on the stream. Almost above the landing he drew up at a by-path leading from the road down the canyon through the forest. With a word to Monsieur Bonvouloir they dismounted, tying their horses in the wood, as the path was too steep to ride.

At the foot of the bluff the path ran near the water along a sandy bank, and presently a low humming sound like the droning of an animal reached them, evolving something like harmony. Hubbard's companion turned to him with wonder, just as Hubbard, who had paused to listen, exclaimed:

"'Tis someone singing 'The Old Hundredth.'"



They stepped from the thicket before a kind of hut at the entrance of which appeared a large bulk in the moonlight, that proved to be a man. He was fashioning with a jack-knife the head of a staff freshly cut from the wood, and for company, humming like a nest of bumble-bees, the sacred melody.

At a word, the man without reply beckoned them to enter the hut, following after and striking from a flint a light for a lantern, first closing the door. The light revealed a broad-shouldered, deep-chested man, in blue cotton shirt and trousers, with ruddy and cheerful face, half hidden by a shock of curly red hair and beard.

"You are Corporal Cotton?" asked Hubbard, recognizing him.

"Corporal Timothy Cotton of Marblehead. Who be you?"

"Lieutenant Hubbard, from headquarters."

"Didn't look for ye so airy, Leftenant," replied Corporal Cotton, his small blue eyes twinkling cheerfully, the exposed surface of his face crinkling in a score of wrinkles, each an encouraging smile.

"We hurried to get ahead of the storm."

"It's comin' from the so'west, and mighty good for the crops arter this long, dry spell," said Corporal Cotton, deliberately.

"The sooner we cross the better, if the storm is near," remarked Monsieur Bonvouloir.

"Guess you be a Frencherman?" observed the Corporal, lifting his lantern to inspect the speaker more closely.

Hubbard explained where their horses had been left, to which the Marblehead man listened quietly, identifying the spot, and then reverting to his previous remark to Monsieur Bonvouloir, he continued:

"I heerd tell that most Frenchermans was barbers or fiddlers."

"I am not either," replied the French merchant.

"Waal," allowed the Marblehead man, philosophically, "I guess people is pretty much alike the world over."

"You can take us right across, Corporal?" asked Hubbard.

"Waal, I mought an' I moughtn't."

His company looked their surprise, and his blue eyes and the wrinkles smiled cheerfully in reply to them.

"'Taint no use crossin' a bridge 'till ye git to it."

"What do you mean?" asked Hubbard.

"Leastways, they ain't no bridge, but a feller on the hill yonder 'd think kinder queer to see ye crossin' the crick so airy. When the clouds come around he won't see ye."

There was wisdom in this, and they had but little time to wait when, the moon having disappeared, the guide led the way to a boat at the landing. Sharp flashes in the west, followed by the heavy roll of thunder, lighted up the steep, wooded hillside opposite whose black mass was a great wall. The tide was running swift, but a few strokes of the boatman's brawny arm carried them into the stream, and after a short



distance with the current, landed them on the opposite bank.

Corporal Cotton explained that at this point the cliff was cut by a ravine, along which was a path beside the bed of a stream that flowed over the hill, but now ran low from the drought. They could follow the path with little trouble to the top of the cliff. On the top was a church burial-ground, and near it a little frame Dutch church in which they could take shelter if the storm came on. A bridle path from Feather-Bed Lane, added he, led to the north along the top of the cliff past the church, and would take them in half an hour's walk to the Van Cortlandt House.

As he turned to leave, Hubbard repeated that he intended to return promptly by the next evening with the flotilla of boats he was to obtain in Yonkers. The Marblehead man replied that he would be waiting at Spuyten Duyvil for orders, and reassuring himself of the location of the horses, he thrust his boat off, disappearing in the darkness.

The trickle of the stream held them to their path, and a brief struggle up the face of the cliff brought them to an open space at the top overlooking the valley. There they paused to breathe and to view the situation.

All was dark where an hour ago the moon had been aglow. A faint tint in the east showed the line of day yet unclouded, but a jagged flash lighted up the heavy cloud piling overhead, and illumined for an instant the whole landscape—the course of the river below, the shores opposite, and beyond the range of its lower

hills, the high rampart of the Palisades which overlook the Hudson. The flash was followed by a heavier burst of thunder rolling off among the wooded hills, and large drops of rain began to fall.

"Magnificent!" exclaimed Monsieur Bonvouloir, with more feeling than he had displayed since leaving Billet's tavern.

"Yonder, I caught sight of the Dutch church, I think," said Hubbard. "We had best keep our coats dry. Hist! Did you hear voices?"

"Spooks! Dutch ghosts from the graveyard," said the Frenchman, gaily. "A fine night for spirits to walk, Monsieur Hubbard."

"Sounded like a footfall," observed his companion; "perhaps a stray cow or horse."

In a few moments they were able to make out a small wooden structure that proved to be the church. Its entrance was not fastened, and the lightning showed an interior fitted with a rough high pulpit and several benches. Hubbard, whose eyes were everywhere, discerned also the bridle path leading from the church to the north. What concerned him more was a certainty that he saw one or two human figures along the path at a little distance.

While the presence of others even at this hour was not of itself remarkable, that vague apprehension returned. He determined to obtain, if possible, further information before communicating an alarm to his companion. To Monsieur Bonvouloir he remarked that the storm had not yet reached them, and he

would make a circuit of inspection to ascertain the route, and if all were clear.

Gusts of wind came hurtling over the hills, the trees bending and moaning beneath them, and with thundering overhead. The sky constantly lighted, was filled with fantastic, purple cloud-forms, like a host of genii. The French merchant was so wrapped in the observation of this spectacle, and in a kind of brooding exhilaration, that he hardly noted the departure of his companion.

Hubbard quickly found the bridle path, along which he moved with sufficient caution, grasping a staff which he had picked up. The wind increased, and with it the frequency of the lightning, as he reached the vicinity where he had seen the figures. He could detect no further trace of them, but amid the uproar of the approaching tempest no other sound was audible at any distance.

The location he had fixed by a tall oak to the left of the path near the edge of the cliff, and sure of his own forest craft, he felt that he could not be mistaken in the locality. But it was easy to fancy a human shape in the fitful flashes. As he crouched and listened he began to assure himself that his fears were merely fancies and a delusion, when, surely, he now heard voices above the storm! One a woman's, raised in appeal, and penetrating the howling wind!

The cry came from a clump of bushes near the foot of the tall oak. Hubbard gained the bushes, looking down upon a slight depression in which there was a clearing around the oak, and the lightning revealed the object of his search. A woman was evidently try-

ing to free herself from two men in the clearing. One of these appeared to him the same man who had been gathering watercress near Monsieur Billet's tavern.

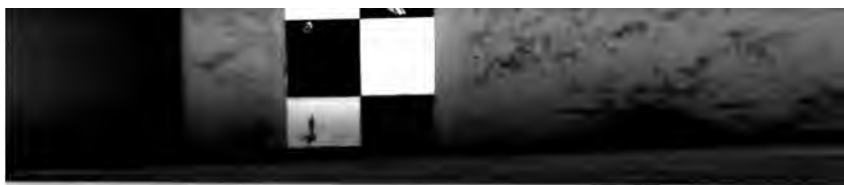
This he recognized at a glance without other thought, as he sprang from the thicket into the group, his cudgel falling on the head of one fellow, who dropped like an ox. The other took to his heels at the first alarm, springing over the cliff. To pursue would have been a waste of time. A breath of relief from the woman made stronger claim upon the chivalric sympathies of the Lieutenant.

He assisted her tenderly to the foot of the tree, conscious that her hands between his own broad palms were delicate and shapely, and that there were rings on her fingers. She had not spoken, but her movement and breathing were deep and excited, and all the chivalry of the young soldier was stirred to its depths in his solicitude for one, whom he was confident, in the spirit of twenty, must be young and beautiful. A vivid flash lighting the sky revealed her features, which at the same instant assumed an expression of fear and warning to him.

"Lady Claremont!" he exclaimed in ecstasy, as a step behind, and a crushing blow, hurled him senseless to the earth.

The storm still held aloof, gathering its forces for a supreme effort. Hubbard's assailant seized the woman, as his companion, who had taken flight, clambered back over the cliff.

"I've done him as bad as he done me," muttered the man, who was Hubbard's old acquaintance, Gil Forbes,



of the fuzzy yellow coat. He bestowed a kick on the prostrate figure, calling to the other: "Git the woman to the church. I'll fix this one."

He drew a long knife to carry out the threat on his helpless victim when the appearance of Bonvouloir on the scene gave a new turn to events. From the church the Frenchman, though absorbed in his reflections, had caught sight of the several figures, and seeing Hubbard's rush to the oak he had hastened to the spot.

The fellow who had seized Lady Claremont pitched forward with a groan at the flash of a pistol, and the Frenchman's sword confronted the ruffian with the knife. The man parried the blade, which would have pierced him, but received a severe gash in the throat, at which he dashed away with a howl, springing over the cliff as he had done before.

This succession of incidents occupied but a moment. Hubbard lay where he had fallen, and the woman bent over him with an expression of sympathy.

"I fear that he is badly hurt," said Bonvouloir. "I will carry him to the church. Those rascals will hardly trouble us any more."

His voice was barely audible in the storm, which was now at hand. He carried the limp figure in his arms back along the path to the church, Lady Claremont following, and the rain pouring in torrents as they reached its shelter. The gusts shook the building. Monsieur Bonvouloir laid his burden down carefully on the pulpit platform and closed the church door to shut out the fierce blasts. The structure, though small and plain, had been built to withstand such gales,

which had howled through the valley and spent their fury on it for a generation.

Then the French merchant brought forth a candle in a pewter candlestick that he had observed on the pulpit, and with flint and tinder produced a faint light which put the surrounding gloom in deeper contrast from the lightning flashes. He went to the door with a rough basin and filled it with water from the clouds. Lady Claremont bathed the head of his injured companion while he held the basin for her.

Hubbard moaned as he lay stretched upon the platform. His eyes were closed, and the blood trickled over his face pale from a bad gash on the head. She kneeled beside him as his lips opened in an indistinct murmur, her white and shapely arms bared to the shoulder, while she bathed the bruise with a remnant torn from her dress.

"I hope he is not so badly hurt," she said, turning to his companion, the candle light falling full upon her face.

Monsieur Bonvouloir started back breathless, dropping the basin, as he saw her face for the first time, and she also sprang to her feet with a startled look.

"Mother of God! Heloise!" he cried in a wild outburst.

"Armand! Armand de la Rourie!" exclaimed she, in lower voice, but no less overcome and agitated.

CHAPTER XXII.

A MEETING IN THE STORM.

Under the shingle roof of this simple Dutch place of worship many a maid and sturdy countryman had been united, but never was so strange a meeting as that between the Lady Claremont and the Count de la Rourie. In their first surprise neither could feel that it was real. A passion that has filled one's whole existence, when suddenly revived by strong emotions, may bring with it all its past impulse and fervor. This man and woman, once welded with the intense love and romance of youth, brought face to face after years of separation, were swept with a great wave of emotion.

For the moment a long interval of doubt and suffering were effaced. He clasped her to him with a tenderness and ardor as though their parting had been but yesterday. Her voice came in sobs as she clung to him, and he pressed kisses upon her face with a passion that overpowered him. A delirium in the air like the storm without possessed them.

"Alas! my friend. I never thought to see thee more," she murmured.

"Do I dream, Heloise?" cried he. "Is this but a fantasie of the storm that all the night has possessed me with memories of thee? Is this your dear form of

living flesh, and all the past a horrible phantom? Oh, God! we are dead! It is in another world I find you! Let me die a thousand deaths, and never wake to think you did deceive, desert and betray me."

"Do you still care for me, Armand?"

"Listen to her voice, O God!"

"Will you hearken, and try to believe me?"

"Only speak to me. I am perishing for the sound of your dear voice."

Her words were low, the tones like a deep, sad strain of music, as she withdrew from his embrace, one arm lingering tenderly as she looked up in his face.

"Let us first attend this poor boy, Armand. More than any other he has brought us once more together."

A faint tint of dawn was struggling through the storm, and the wind, weird flashes, crashing thunder and the downpour of the flood upon the church roof could not drown the gray haze at the windows. Hubbard uttered an occasional moan as she resumed her task, bathing his head and face, that were flushed with fever, while her companion gathered fresh supplies of water as it poured from the skies.

Perhaps a woman's wit desired the opportunity to control and adjust her thoughts. Neither of them spoke, but when the unconscious young soldier had been placed in a more comfortable position, she returned to La Rourie where he stood gazing into the storm from the window.

"Will you hear me now, Armand?"

He turned in silence, gazing eagerly into her face

by the growing light, to read those traces there he once had known so well.

"You have scarcely grown older in these years, Heloise!"

"But you were not so," she said, touching tenderly the silver in his hair.

Could there be aught but truthfulness in her face and in her deep eyes!

"It is a century since then," said he.

A flash of bitterness leaped into his face, and a fierce emotion rose and overcame him as it had once before that evening with Hubbard.

"If I thought you false I could kill you now!" he breathed in fierce undertone.

A more timid spirit might have quailed under the gathering frenzy of that glance, and had she at that moment, the passion within him might have closed in tragedy.

"But for your coming, Armand," said she, "I might now have been dead."

His fury vanished and contrition and tenderness thronged in its stead as he sought her forgiveness.

"Tell me, dear heart. I am not worthy. You did not deceive me of your own will?"

"Surely, Armand, you never thought so?"

"I never had word from you after I left, Heloise."

"Your message came of your parents' death, and then of their resolve that you should never marry a poor English girl. I replied, returning your promise, and waited, but you never came."

"I wrote daily till I heard that you were gone. Then I left to seek you, in vain."

"And I never heard from you after, dear. I mistrusted. Since, I have learned that my aunt, with whom I lived, had been led by others to deceive me."

"Who were they? There shall be a heavy day of reckoning."

"Do not blame her now; she is dead. But she thought it for my good when your relatives were leagued to keep us apart."

"Curse them for the misery they have made!" he exclaimed fiercely.

"It was then that a legacy came to my aunt, and we left all and returned to England."

"The man!" he cried fiercely. "Who was he that accompanied you?"

"He was a scoundrel," she replied, her face flushing. "'Twas he who brought the lies that he told me came from you."

"It was Simcoe?"

"Oh, no, no! I will not tell you now. It is long past, and bitter to mar this meeting. Oh, it was a wicked plot, Armand!" she cried, with an outburst of emotion, and continuing, after a moment: "He knew me only as Mary Gibbon, my aunt's name, a simple English girl. He pretended to love me, and I—I cared for nothing when I thought you had left me."

"*Mon Dieu!*" he clenched his hands. "That Heaven should permit this infamy!"

"I escaped him, thank Heaven, and my aunt's fortune changed my life."

"Ah, Heloise!" cried he, clasping her again. "What care we now when the good Providence has brought us once more together? Are we not at last united? And our lives shall atone for the past. Let us return to France. Or better, if you will, here where this new world is growing, make our home!"

"Alas, Armand—" it was she who hesitated—but for an instant only—"the years have changed us."

"But they shall bring us back our youth."

"Oh, how can that be possible?"

"All is possible, unless you no longer love me, Heloise."

"I shall always love you, my friend. But we are no longer children, and I—I am married, Armand."

"Married!" he groaned with an intonation of despair. "Married!" and he sank back overpowered with a sense of an unfathomable mystery which appeared to envelope this woman.

"Yes, my friend. Married, yet a widow, with a husband still living, though better he were dead."

"Did I not say this was a horrible dream come to haunt me?" he cried wildly. "Why should I live to be in torture?"

"Armand," she threw her arms about him. "Can you not still care for the past? Have you nothing to live for more worthy than I? Listen to me, dear. I cannot tell you all now, but the time will come when I may. Hear me, dearest. We shall both be the better for this meeting. Do you know how often I have thought and longed to see you once again? But I am no more the simple girl you knew, my friend. I

have suffered, and learned from suffering—and there is much even for a woman to do in these days. Sure, there is more for you, a man.”

Her presence and voice had their calm, subduing influence upon him. After a few moments he asked hoarsely:

“Who is he, your husband? Why are you in this remote country—here, at this strange hour of night?”

“My husband is in England, Armand—an imbecile, deranged. I am in America to bring about a settlement of his affairs. I am the Lady Claremont. He was the Lord Courtenay.”

He looked at her in wonder and compassion, sitting down beside her as she hid her face in her hands, and caressing her hair.

“You have suffered,” she said, looking up presently, with a smile through tears. “But you have grown brave and strong; you were ever impulsive and hot-blooded, Armand. What brings you to this new world, my friend, and, how strange, here, to-night?”

“Ah, Heloise, I had, indeed something to live for. but it all seems nothing now. I have offered all to the new nation that is struggling here for life, and to the noble patriot and chief who leads its armies.”

“To Washington!” she exclaimed, the growing light showing a flush of color and animation in her face. “And you, too, feel his cause so great and sure. How can he overcome all that is arrayed against him?”

“He can and will with the help of France. She will

give the aid and sympathy that will bring with it success."

"O Armand, this is but a selfish world! How know you what France will do?"

"It is a world with new thoughts, that are dawning," replied he with more feeling. "All France is roused, and she will not stand by idly, and see the future of mankind strangled at birth."

"I wonder that I had not heard of you," she replied thoughtfully, "when you had but just come to New York?"

"It is my second visit, but I have only remained for a short time." Her eyes followed him with an unconscious intuition, as of one in a trance, as he continued: "My presence and purpose here were known but to a few. I have met and conferred with the President of Congress; here in New York with General Washington and Dr. Franklin; these are State matters I am telling you, Heloise."

"I am listening, Armand." She sat with her hands clasped and a strange expression.

"I carry now the papers of an agreement between France and these American States; the Count de Vergennes, do you not remember, is my kinsman?"

"Yes, yes! I remember!" she replied, with an abstraction that the excitement expressed in her features belied.

"At his suggestion," he continued, "I undertook this mission, and in another week when it is completed, I shall draw my sword in the service of this country."

"How can all this be, and I knew nothing?" she cried.

"No one knew that I was other than a French merchant, Achard Bonvouloir."

"You!" cried Lady Claremont, springing to her feet. "You, Bonvouloir. You! Armand! Oh, *Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu!*"

"What is it, Heloise, that so affects you?"

"Oh, that is too much, my friend! Let me tell you that I knew Bonvouloir. That is why I came here to-night. Some prescience did surely direct me. I knew that he was to be captured here to-night, and delivered to the British as a French emissary."

"How could you know that?" he demanded.

"It was this which brought me from my home yonder on the island, to the house of friends near by—they are relatives of my mother, De Vauxs, who were Huguenot *émigrés*—where he was to be taken. I feared he might be injured. *Hélas!* It was for you I feared, and for you I came!"

She trembled with the emotion that came over her, and he was obliged to support her for the moment, but she recovered quickly.

"You must leave me at once, my friend," she said more earnestly than she had yet spoken. "The storm is over, but the danger is not. Others will be here—even now they may be at hand. Hasten! Do not linger if you care for me, Armand!"

"Do you think me so weak?" he smiled at her vehemence. "You have given me new life only to

destroy it again. What better than to end it here, if I cannot defend myself?"

"You know not what you say! Have you not a duty to perform? Go, Armand, I entreat you, because I love you!" Her sincerity showed in her emotion; she threw her arms about him with her entreaty.

"I cannot leave this lad uncared for. He also has a mission."

"He shall be cared for, I promise. My friends are near at hand. Will you not go, Armand, before it is too late?"

"His fever runs high," replied the Frenchman placing a hand on Hubbard's head, "but I do not think him fatally hurt. I will leave him with you, Heloise, and myself do his service."

Opening the coat of the wounded officer La Rourie took from it the packet for General Clinton which he placed within his pocket, as Lady Claremont from the entrance repeated excitedly that someone was approaching. He lifted her once more to him in a parting clasp, and sprang from the church along the path, in the direction of the Van Cortland House.

Morning was at hand; the sun would soon show itself. In the west the sky had cleared, black clouds overhead, stragglers of the storm, were driving to the coast. La Rourie had taken barely ten steps when a horseman, dashing up, drew rein before the church, directly across his path. He looked upon the Frenchman with an astonishment that appeared in his face and voice:

"The Count de la Rourie!" he exclaimed.

"Simcoe! You perjured villain!" cried the other

springing upon the horseman with a fury for which he was unprepared.

Simcoe taken unawares was dragged from his horse headlong. His assailant stood over him sword drawn, but changing at the moment his fierce intent, he seized the horse instead and leaped upon it.

"I'll take no advantage of you, Simcoe!" he exclaimed. "We shall meet again! For you, perfidious woman!"—his anger choked utterance, but with a parting, indignant glance at Lady Claremont that could find no words, he struck spurs into the horse, dashing away as two other horsemen came galloping up.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE END OF THE WAR IN SIGHT.

Colonel Simcoe, confused and for the moment partly stunned by the fierce onslaught, had struggled to his feet as these newcomers rode upon the scene. They, like him, were plainly attired showing no trace of military calling in their dress, and their horses were bespattered with mud from fast riding. To Lady Claremont, whom they recognized, they raised their hats in respectful salute, turning with surprise for explanation to Colonel Simcoe.

"The storm has played havoc with our plans, Colonel De Lancey," said Simcoe coming forward; "and the game has escaped."

"In that case we need waste no time," replied the elder of the two horsemen; "or we shall miss the day's fray."

"Ride on to the 'Neck,'" returned Simcoe. "I shall be with you in half an hour."

They started with but little more to say. He waited until they had gone from sight in a direction almost opposite that taken by the Frenchman a few moments before, and then turned to Lady Claremont.

"What does this all mean?" he inquired.

"What you have but just repeated, Colonel Simcoe. Monsieur Bonvouloir has escaped."

"And was La Rourie with him? I do not wonder then, with such a raging beast."

"Bonvouloir and the Count de la Rourie are one and the same," she replied, to his further amazement.

"He—la Rourie, Bonvouloir!" he cried, beginning to grasp the situation. "And how came you out here at this hour?"

"Not entirely of my own will, Colonel Simcoe, but through those men you employed, and from whom I owe protection to the Count de la Rourie." She related briefly the attack from the ruffians at which Simcoe's anger arose, and he vowed to shoot them at sight if he saw them again.

"No, I am not hurt," he replied to her inquiries; "but how reckless of you to leave the house alone at such an hour at night. Will you never cease to take such chances?"

"It has ended better than might have been hoped," said she turning into the church. "Only this young officer who helped me was injured."

"'Tis the same hare-brain whose skull I nearly emptied last night," said Simcoe advancing, with a glance at Hubbard.

"He was my escort last night, and he accompanied the Count de la Rourie."

"His face has something more familiar. I believe he is that long-legged Express of whom I told you, that I ran into at the tavern in East Chester, when you came on from Boston."

"He is the same. His express gave warning of your plans to take Washington, and the discovery."

"Well, I wish him no greater harm than has befallen him, but he had best keep off my path; it does not seem to bring him fortune. Did you speak of Conway to La Rourie?"

"No," replied Lady Claremont. "I doubt if he knows of him. And I have no wish to call up again what is past and dead."

"That will not prevent me from settling with the Chevalier when the time comes," said Simcoe. "Sir William was right. It would have been a pretty capture had we taken La Rourie, involving the Count Vergennes in a tangle of polite, diplomatic lies to clear himself."

"Are your troops all landed?" she inquired.

"They were all ashore by daylight this morning. If our plans work out to-day we have in hand a bit of strategy that will surprise Mr. Washington and his bush shooters when the fight's on; one that will go far to bring this war to a close."

"Be not too sure," said Lady Claremont, "the best plans are thwarted, as to-night."

"I wish I were as confident of your regard as I am of this outcome," he replied. "I doubt not we may capture the greater part of the Yankee army—if Washington, himself, gets clear—with the river at their backs, and our ships holding the channel. It will give these stiff-necked rebels a lesson in war that will take the conceit from them, and send their sentimental French schemers posthaste back to France."

"Your lesson may be timely for them," she returned. "I sometimes think that Providence aids these rebels with the unforeseen, they so quickly take advantage of it."

"You will become yourself a rebel," he said, impatiently; "if you remain much longer in their company."

"Perhaps," she replied; "if the British troops delay much longer the close of the war."

"Do you still have hope of treating through Washington?"

"There will be hope so long as the troops are in the field. What is like to be done with the leaders, now, if we are successful?"

"Who can say? Sir William is lenient—too much so to my thinking. If this French business becomes known, as belike it will, a call from the Parliament is most probable, for some of these country gentlemen to cross the water, and afford a wholesome example for the kingdom's benefit."

"We shall soon see," replied the Lady Claremont; "if the end of the war is so near in sight. Here now is Thomas whose horse you may take."

She called to the groom, and when he had given the horse to Colonel Simcoe, directed the man to return quickly to the house and secure aid in removing Hubbard there.

"I will see you safely housed," said Simcoe, "before I leave."

"Do not wait," she returned. "Remember you are still in an enemy's country."

"You have never the time nor the disposition to give me consideration," cried Simcoe impatiently. After trying vainly to interest her, he sprang at last into the saddle with vexation, dashing away in a mood hardly less fierce than that in which La Rourie had preceded him so shortly before.

She remained leaning against the church entrance for some moments as if for support from exhaustion.

"Who would have thought," she exclaimed with a sigh, "that such a meeting could have been this night! Yes, Armand, we have changed far too much ever to be what we once were to each other. Have I not, too, as you have, my work to do? Does not some strange fatality which this night has brought us together, still hold more in store for me? Who can say what the end will be, or when it will come?"

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE WAR GOES ON.

Hubbard's lucky star being still ascendant he escaped fatal injury from a blow that might well have fractured the skull of an ox. For a week he lay unconscious, his brain numbed and his mind wandering. A week will sometimes be crowded with the events and opportunities of a lifetime, and in this interval occurred many things to transform the world about him, entirely regardless that so important an actor as Lieutenant Jonathan Hubbard lay silent and helpless, without a word in the direction of them.

British and the Continental armies met in that interval, in hand-to-hand conflict on Long Island, the Yankee troops showing their mettle, but being thoroughly beaten, outwitted and defeated. Only the foresight and the resource of the Commander-in-chief had saved the Colonial forces from utter disaster and annihilation. Yankee confidence in itself, and its ability to whip the whole British nation was shaken. American independence was waning, and a few days might see it dispersed and evaporated as so much brag and bluster.

The house to which Hubbard had been taken—a substantial stone structure with long, slanting roof,

a type followed by the early Dutch settlers, as stout and broad of beam, and rugged as themselves—was but a short distance from the frame church, the scene of the stormy night's episode. An old housewife, long known and faithful to Lady Claremont, proved an attentive nurse—medical aid being, fortunately, scarce—and careful nursing the chief remedy for the wounded soldier, he presently recovered from the first shock, when nature reasserted itself, and vigorous youth and constitution began to resume their sway.

Meanwhile the unconscious object of these attentions continued to retrace those incidents that had previously so greatly agitated his mind. Much of the time he seemed to be walking without limit to his rambles, on the Greenwich Road with Lady Claremont, all his enthusiasm for war and the liberty and independence of his country having departed. At one time there was a sound of cannon and of battle in the distance, but strangely enough, it awakened no response. Some inexplicable influence repressed his interest, and the sounds of conflict continued to grow fainter, until they ceased.

It was with a great sigh of relief that Hubbard opened his eyes in the broad day with the sun streaming through one small, open window. He marveled at the thickness of the wall which showed at the window. The room was large and airy, and the bed clean, white and refreshing. A movement at the window directed his wandering eyes, and Lady Claremont approached, looking down on him with a smile and a cheer he could not resist. She assured him that he was better,

placing a hand lightly on his head. It required so great an effort that he did not reply. The gentle pressure of her hand, and the bidding to sleep, were enough to close his eyes again.

When he awoke once more presently, it was night. All around him was dark and quiet, except the trill of crickets, that entered the window with the cry of the whip-poor-will. He raised himself but fell back exhausted and faint. Where was he, and what the cause of this helplessness? The storm of the night before, the men under the oak, the attack, Lady Claremont, the rest was blank. But she had been there in the room in broad day. He surely could not have been lying there all the day! What of his mission? Where was the packet? Where were his clothes? He shouted with all his strength, and the nurse entered directly with a candle.

"My clothes! Let me have them!" the patient called, and the woman brought them.

The papers were gone. Hubbard fell back speechless. He had failed and in his weakened state the thought paralyzed all energy. The nurse left him with the recommendation to go to sleep, and because he could do nothing else, he soon followed that advice. The next day he was stronger, and after eating he was able to sit up, but trying to stand, he became dizzy. His appetite returned, and the nurse answered his inquiries telling him where he was, and that if he remained quiet he would be fully recovered in a few weeks.

"A few weeks! I have been here a day already,

which is too long," exclaimed the patient. "I have duties that will not wait."

"A day is it!" cried the woman. "An' ye'll 've ben here two weeks come the day after to-morrow, if a day."

"Two weeks! That can not be," groaned Hubbard. "And Lady Claremont, was she not here yesterday?" he asked in subdued tones.

"A week since," replied the woman, handing him a note from her which he devoured eagerly. In it Lady Claremont expressed deep gratitude for the timely aid he had rendered her, and hoped that the injuries received in her behalf would not interfere with his duties. She thought him out of danger, and that he would soon be restored, if prudent. She urged him not to attempt a return to the service at once, but in view of present conditions, advised that it would be better to retire from active service and return home. It was doubtful whether she would ever see him again, but she should never fail to remember and be grateful to him, and if ever in her power it would be her greatest pleasure to show her gratitude in aiding him. She enclosed a small memento that he might care to keep in her memory.

This souvenir, a seal ring of curious stone set in gold, Hubbard dashed to the floor. Return home, indeed! Did she think him a boy to be frightened at the sound of a gun? Where was his packet? Who, but she, could have taken it? Had he not ample proof of her interest in conveying such information to the

enemy? What a fool had he been to lose his head and imperil all! If he had but followed his first resolve and given information of her to the Commander-in-chief, all these fatal blunders might have been averted. There was no telling now to what serious consequences they had led.

These self-reproaches and accusations occupied him while weakness confined him to the room, but with the reaction, later, he again perused the note, and for want of other occupation, presently sought for the ring, and having found it, placed it in a pocket. An increasing appetite and returning strength brought with it confidence and fresh resolve, that after another day he prepared to put into effect. In pursuance of this he arose at daybreak, gathered up his few effects, and quietly made his exit through the window of the room rather than arouse the household.

Having carefully considered the situation, and assured himself by inquiries of the nurse, the location of the house, he was certain of finding his way back to the church in which he and the French merchant had taken refuge from the storm. From that he could make his way along the river to Kings Bridge, when it would be only a question of means to get back to town, and to report at headquarters. His failure, and the consciousness of his personal responsibility rested heavily on his mind, and recurred with Lady Claremont's reference in her note to "present conditions." What was the meaning—what could have happened in that interval while he had been lying idle? Once in the open air he dismissed such conjecture as useless

for the present, with something like his customary assurance and toss of the head.

A dense fog had settled over the neighborhood, and at the outset Hubbard encountered in it an obstacle on which he had not calculated. A few paces from the house the mist became so heavy that he could no longer discern the building. The emergency brought his woodcraft into play. By carefully retracing his steps he discovered with patience a path which appeared to lead in the direction of the church. In this he was not mistaken, and having gained the church and adjusted his bearings, he made his way confidently down the cliff through the same ravine he had climbed at night with Monsieur Bonvouloir.

In the valley the fog was packed more densely over the river than it had been on the heights, and the rains swelled the stream, which fell in a noisy series of cascades to the river. At the foot of the cliff Hubbard caught the sound of voices and the splash of oars. He was about to call out and ask to be carried over the stream when a boat ran up against the bank, and two men left it, climbing up the hill. As he remained perfectly quiet they passed him in evident haste, and were soon out of hearing when he took possession of the craft, congratulating himself on his good fortune as he made his way across the Haerlem.

He directed the boat with a view of reaching the landing from which Corporal Cotton had come, a task attended by as much uncertainty with the fog hanging heavily on the prow of the skiff, as it would have been at night ; but reaching the other bank he felt his course

carefully along it until some indication should aid him.

Soon he became aware that the boat was being guided by another influence than his own. There was no current in the direction in which it was pointing. He could neither hear or see anything to account for so strange a manifestation. He pulled at the oars in vain. From the dense bank of fog in front not a sound or a movement in the water showed the nature of this remarkable force, but some strange, irresistible influence had enveloped his boat, and was drawing it forward with a power he could not overcome.

Although not of a superstitious nature Hubbard felt a curious, chilly sensation at this uncanny influence amid the stillness, and the dense vapor that his sight could not penetrate. He crept to the bow of the boat to get if possible some further understanding, when at once the mystery was solved. The prong of a knotted stick, the handle of which led up into the fog, was made fast to the boat. At that instant the boat rubbed against the landing and stopped, as a voice, whose deep bass Hubbard instantly recognized, issued from the fog:

"You kin come aout, naow. It's all right."

CHAPTER XXV.

CORPORAL COTTON'S SUNDAY BREAKFAST.

A grateful sense of relief filled Lieutenant Hubbard as he clambered quickly from the skiff confronting the burly figure of Corporal Timothy Cotton. All the little crinkles and creases in the stout Corporal's ruddy visage were smiling broadly until Hubbard stood up before him. Then they vanished, disappearing amid the thick, curly undergrowth of red hair and beard, and were succeeded by a look of blank astonishment.

"Waal!" he ejaculated. "You're there, be yeou?"

Hubbard assured him of the certainty of this fact, and added his wish to get at once to town and report at headquarters with the least possible delay, to all which the Marblehead man, who continued to regard him with fixed attention, replied simply: "You be, hey?"

"Can you get me a horse?" continued Hubbard, without regarding the reply.

"I mought," responded the Corporal deliberately. "I wouldn't er tho't you'd took my boat."

Hubbard explained how he had come upon the boat, and repeated his desire to get back at once into town.

"Waal, I guess you'll have to go 'long with me, Leftenant."

"What do you mean?" exclaimed Hubbard at some vague authority in his manner.

"What be you doing over there naow?" asked the Corporal when they had entered his hut.

"You carried us over last night," returned Hubbard, his dates yet unsettled.

"Eh," returned his companion, "last night?"

"Oh!" groaned the Lieutenant. "I am knocked out, Corporal! I feel as if I had been dead and dug up." Then he related briefly what had happened to him after leaving Corporal Cotton on the night of the storm, and since. His companion followed with close attention and sympathy, the crinkles and smiles starting out anew in his face, which had reached a broad glow as Hubbard finished.

"Waal, you do look a little peaked, that's a fact," he observed. "You see I had orders to keep a look aout for ye—but I never'd tho't 'twere you a-borrowin' my boat without askin'."

"And have you been up here ever since?" asked Hubbard.

"Off and on me and Josier has been here pretty much of ten days. Josier, he's up to the Bridge, naow. We'd expected he'd go daown hum on a farlow to git in the corn an' 'tater crops this month, but from the look o' things I kinder guess the wimmen folks'll have to do it themselves. Josier, he's my brother, you know."

"And are you going down to York soon?" inquired Hubbard impatiently.

"I mought. Leastways, the tide'll turn putty quick,

when I kalkilate to float raound by the Haerlem as far as Kip's Bay. Seein' as we have no hosses 'twill be as quick, an' for Sunday mornin' as fittin' an' proper. Mebbe you'd like a snack o' somethin' to eat?"

The Marblehead boatman was not to be hurried, nor did he permit anything to disturb him, while his movements had a method that did not escape his impatient companion's notice. He appeared to have been assigned with his brother to some sort of patrol duty on the river for the past week or two, and his confidence having been restored by Hubbard's statement, he showed an obliging disposition after his own fashion to assist him. The prospect of food appealed also to Hubbard's increasing appetite, and established a stronger bond of confidence and good humor.

From a kind of closet in his hut the Corporal produced an earthen dish, which held the generous remnant of a crisp, browned composition, that was easily identified as baked beans. The sight of it awakened pleasant associations that shut out graver responsibilities for the moment. A log did duty as a table, and with a pewter spoon the host ladled out an ample allowance for his guest on another earthen plate, retaining the dish himself. He explained that they were breaking up housekeeping, and urged Hubbard not to be backward in eating, setting the example by the large cargo he conveyed on the spoon to his own mouth.

"'Twould be a pity to leave 'em to spile," the host observed between breaths. "Porke an' beins is bone an' sinewe; an' it's lastin' for Sunday brekfust."

Hubbard nodded an assent, more convenient than talking with a full mouth.

"Josier, he cooked 'em," said the Corporal in a confidential tone, the crinkles breaking again from his curly shock of red beard. "In the farm house yonder they had lots of beins an' porke that was spilin' to be cooked—an' m'lasses. It was a shame for 'em to go to waste. These Yorkers don't know what's in porke an' beins. Josier, he showed 'em; he larned of Aunt Mary daown to hum."

Hubbard expressed his appreciation of the cook's abilities, while the Corporal skirmishing around his dish, after repeated efforts slid the point of his spoon by a bit of strategy under the last crumb, conveying the captured bean to his mouth in triumph. Then he returned to the larder and brought forth another dish containing the half of a pumpkin pie.

"Punkin pye is first cousin to porke an' beins, 'cordin' to my notion," resumed Corporal Cotton. "Little more 'ristocratic, sum punkins is, an' more proper an' fittin' to top off Sunday breakfust. It don't do no harm to be a little 'ristocratic sometimes, in my 'pinion. Kinder braces you up more respectable like."

"The pumpkins came from the farm, too?" inquired Hubbard, sampling the pie.

"They're layin' loose yonder on the hill, an' no cattle to feed 'em to. I'm feered they'll go to waste if them British an' Dutch Heshins git 'em. Josier, he made the pyes, too. If we only had a kag of cyder, naow, it would come right handy to wash 'em all daown."

In the absence of cider the Corporal obtained some

cool spring water, after which, having completed their meal, he washed and returned the dishes to the closet. Then his burly figure sank down on its knees beside the rude table while he recited the morning prayer, whose words were familiar to Hubbard from infancy in his own New England home.

"I guess we'll be ready naow for Sunday sarvice," resumed the Marblehead boatman, rubbing a broad back and shoulder against the door post until the whole structure vibrated, a process which appeared to allay the irritation, and with a glow of satisfaction he continued: "Josier an' me kept Saturday night, last evenin', after the sun went daown. Josier, he read the Scripters, an' when I started the Doxology he jined in, though Josier never was much on holdin' a tune. If Ginerel Washington moves out of taown to-day we kinder thought there won't be much chance for a fittin' an' proper obsarvin' of the Sabbath."

"Is General Washington going to leave New York?" cried Hubbard, starting up.

"That's the idee. Leastways we're not speakin' of it loud, jest yit—"

"What is the trouble, Corporal?" exclaimed the Lieutenant excitedly, his sense of duty returning afresh.

"I guess the tide's turnin' by this time, so'st we can git daown stream afore the fog lifts. Mebbe we'll ketch a peep of the British ships."

"Are the British ships up the river?"

"Waal, they be slightly up the river, Leftenant."

"And where is General Washington?"

"He's in camp daown in Bloomingdale—leastways I

heard last night he was to be up on the Breakneck Hill this morning. He'll be back by the time we get daown. They's an idee the British is watchin' us, an' goin' to move putty soon, you know."

"I don't know anything, Corporal. Has there been a battle?"

Corporal Cotton hummed a strain of the Doxology by way of reply as he led to the boat.

The tide was setting down stream, rapid and smooth. Under the heavy fog, which yet showed no signs of lifting, the water curled in long rolls with an oily movement. The Marblehead boatman entered the skiff, taking the oars and indicating Hubbard to a seat in the stern.

CHAPTER XXVI.

TELLS OF A GREAT REBEL DEFEAT.

A slight effort sent the craft out in midstream where the current caught it, and Corporal Cotton, resting on his oars, had only to direct its progress from time to time to hold the course. The tide became stronger as they floated on. Hubbard, from his seat in the stern, kept a sharp lookout by direction of his companion as they cut swiftly through the heavy bank of fog; but the keenest sight could not penetrate the dense vapor. The high cliffs on either side of the river were concealed. No sign or sounds of life reached them, and to all purposes they might have been on mid-ocean.

"Yaas, there has been a fight," resumed the Marblehead boatman, returning to the inquiry of Hubbard after an interval of silence, and when they were well under way. "We've been licked, Leftenant, out of our boots."

Hubbard repressed his dismay and impatience, and waited.

"Leastways, we might have been licked out of our boots," the Corporal modified, "if the General hadn't got all the boats on the river, good an' reddy, so's't we

could carry the hull army back from Brookline to New York, as slick as you please, before them Britishers got their eyes open."

"Oh, the boats!" cried Hubbard. "I was to bring them down from Yonkers."

"I went up the next day an' fetched 'em. Josier an' me have been burnin' 'em all up last week, 'ceptin' this one an' jest a few others; that's one reason I was so particular 'baout havin' this one borrowed without lief or askin'. Ginerall Howe, he's over in Brookline, an' he has no boats even to make a call on us; I guess he'd paid a putty good price for them we burned up. They made good bonfires an' driv all the m'skeeters off the river with the smoke."

The precautionary purpose of the part of the mission that had been assigned to Hubbard was now clear to the Lieutenant as he followed with close attention his companion's narrative.

"The Ginerall, he sent up a company from Colonel Glover to help with the boats. You see, the fightin' had been goin' on all day, an' we'd got the wust of it. Them riglars an' Dutch Heshins was too many for us. 'Twan't no pleasant thing, nuther. They got araound in a sort of fashion we wan't kalkilatin' on. An' Ginerall Greene he was sick, an' all the rest got kinder mixed up putty bad. But jest sech a fog like this came up after dark, sos't the British ships couldn't sail up the river, as they'd laid out their plans to. I told Ginerall Washington I guess'd, mebbe, the Lord had sent it providential for this occasion. I don't set as much on special providences, as some folks do, though my

brother, Josier, he does ; but sometimes they be mighty convincin'. But I b'lieve the Lord of hosts fights on the side of Freedom and Independency 'gainst all the Kings an' Tyrants in creation."

"Where was our army, Corporal?" asked Hubbard.

"They was all driv up in a drove on the heights raound about the Brookline Ferry ; leastways, all that was left—abaout six or seven thousand of 'em. There was a thousand or more killed or hurt, an' a couple thousand taken prisoners. Ginerall Lord Sterling an' Ginerall Sullivan was taken prisoners. Sir William Howe he went to sleep, expectin' to bring up the ships an' scoop in the rest of us next mornin'."

The Lieutenant heaved a great sigh at his loss of this opportunity, held his breath and listened.

"Ginerall Washington he was over in York all day with the rest of the rigiments, reddy for the British if they should try to land over there, which it was thought they would, but they didn't, seein' we was prepared. I rowed the Ginerall over to Brookline toward night. He looked putty glum an' anxious-like at the way things was goin', an' afterwards when so many of the sojers was killed when they was fightin' hard. I reckon it couldn't be helped. Nothin' seemed to be goin' right, an' ye couldn't tell who 'twas to blame."

"What did General Washington do?" asked Hubbard.

"The Ginerall he kep' cool. There was a lot to try a man's temper—I heerd say as he has a temper when it gits loose—I gess it isn't over bein' tried yet. 'Taint

allus so easy to hold on to your temper an' caount ten, as Josias ses, when things is goin' any way for Sunday."

Hubbard assented to this, and the Corporal continued: "They said he didn't get any sleep, or his clo'es off for three nights. When I told him the 'rangements 'baout the boats, he said everything depended upon us for to be cautious, so's't the British wouldn't git an inklin' of what we was up to. An' they didn't! We done it putty slick, if I do say it. It was a dark night; 'twas as black as the side of our old black caow, Betsy, when we got daown off the Brookline Ferry. The camp fires was kept blazin' up on the hill, an' the British never s'pected what was doin' right under their noses until somebody fired a gun, an' then we'd just left with the last boatload of our soldiers."

"The fighting was pretty hard, I presume," Hubbard ventured.

"Yes, I guess 'twas. Josier, he was with Colonel Glover all day in the thick of it. Me an' him was both of us in Bunker Hill, which was a good fight, as far as it went, but Josier, he sez this was wuss. Ye'd best keep a sharp look ahead naow, Leftenant. We're coming raound into the East River, an' the tide's a-runnin' aout like a grist mill race."

A long, quiet sweep of the oars directed the boat with increased speed down the smooth and rapid current. Corporal Cotton added, for Hubbard's information, that everything had been quiet since the Long Island battle, but that something was expected at any moment. General Howe, he said, wanted to put an

end to the war, and to get Washington to surrender the rest of the army. He was known to be building boats to cross over to New York, and the American troops were leaving the city, most of them being camped back of Kip's Bay and beyond Murray Hill, where he had been ordered to report that morning.

"Most of the British ships is lyin' over t'other side of the river, behind Black'ell's Island," resumed Corporal Cotton. "Naow the sun's brightenin' up, mebbe we can git a sight of 'em. We're comin' daown through Hurl Gate an' the tide's slidin' putty fast, but I'd like to make sure where them ships be without gettin' away from shore more'n we have to."

He guided the course of the boat with greater caution, and with a sailor's tact and experience, as they approached the destination. Kip's Bay was a natural cove half way down the island, with which Hubbard was acquainted as a landing place. A regiment of Parson's Connecticut troops was stationed there, Cotton said, and General Putnam's present quarters were but a little distance away.

A sound of oars and boats caught Hubbard's attention as they were moving more leisurely, and he directed his companion's notice. The brawny arms checked the craft as if it were suspended by anchor, while the Corporal bent forward to get the direction. The sounds appeared close at hand, but muffled. A subdued murmur of voices was also audible. The heavy wall of the fog was still impenetrable, but it was becoming perceptibly brighter as the sun's rays grew stronger.

"'Pears to be quite some few on 'em," observed the Corporal in a low guarded undertone. He moved his oars, imitating the sound that reached them, but putting fresh movement to the boat. As it shot forward he turned almost instantly to avoid a barge that loomed across their bows. Through the fog they could see that it was crowded with men whose forms were outlined of a giant size in the mist.

"Ahoy! Mind your compass!" the deep bass of the Marblehead boatman rumbled in a firm undertone of command.

"Starb'aird! Starb'aird! Steady!" repeated the Corporal.

They glided ahead, only to swing up the next instant beside another loaded barge, and the dexterity and readiness of the Corporal were again successful in avoiding actual collision. The men in the boats they could see were British soldiers, and once or twice they caught a Dutch accent. Other boats equally loaded were moving near on all sides and in the same direction with them, so that all the skill of the Marblehead boatman was kept in play to avoid contact in the fog.

The surface of the water became smoother as they neared the shore within the Bay, and out of the main current, but the sun was growing brighter and the air warmer. Assured presently of his direction, and that they were beyond the immediate limit of the barges, the Corporal bent to the oars with a stroke that lifted the skiff over the water and sent it speeding on its course. It was not too soon. A puff of wind passed over them, catching the mist and sweeping it

away in a breath to the Sound. To Hubbard's intense satisfaction they were well within the crescent of Kip's Bay and barely more than a stone's throw from the white beach.

Behind them the mist was rolling up and back like a great curtain, leaving the river surface clear. The sun shone down hot from a deep blue sky on a flotilla of flat boats loaded to the gunwales with British troops. Beyond, the fog still lingering, clung to the masts and shrouds of the British ships. They had passed directly through the fleet of barges, the nearest of which was little more than a hundred yards distant. The course they had come was dotted around with boatloads of British soldiers whose bright red coats and polished brass helmets made vivid color spots on the smooth, green water.

"Looks like the old medder at hum with a sprinkle of dandelions in the red clover," smiled the Corporal, bending his broad back to a stroke that hurled them forward, the boat grating upon the beach.

A shout from the nearest barge hailed them, and then an order, followed by a rattle of arms as Hubbard leaped from the boat. The next instant a volley from a score of muskets crashed over the water, the balls scattering and singing around them.



CHAPTER XXVII.

WHAT HAPPENED AT KIP'S BAY.

Hubbard sprang upon the shore with a shout seeing the Colonial troops on the rising ground above at a little distance from the water. He ran up to join them followed by Corporal Cotton, as the whole fleet of barges pulled in toward the landing, and another volley of musketry, and a small cannon were discharged from the boats with no more effect than the first.

Parson's Connecticut regiment were new arrivals not yet baptized in fire, but filled with stories of the terrible onslaught of British and Hessians, at the Long Island fight, still fresh in memory. The volunteers stood with open-mouths, staring at the enemy who appeared to have fallen from the sky as the mist cleared from the river. Even the officers lost their wits at the sound of whistling bullets plowing up the earth and flattening on the rocks. A third volley completed the panic. Most of the new recruits dropped their guns and ran. A few fired their pieces in air before taking to their heels.

The volunteers had been stationed there until the column had come up from the city when they were to have fallen back behind the hills of the upper

island. Their break would leave an opening in the line for the British advance, cutting off the troops below. Hubbard yelled himself hoarse with indignation calling on them to stand. They glared at him like wild men as they ran. He seized a gun and strove with Corporal Cotton, and a few of the officers and men who had rallied, to check the stampede.

A fresh detachment coming up at a quick-step, they gathered a group of cooler heads, and some of the runaways finding themselves still alive, returned to the ranks. These formed a hasty front above the beach as the British boats advanced in a regular line to the shore. The sun flashing on the bayonets and brass helmets presented a formidable aspect of war. Another volley—a hundred muskets this time, flashed and vibrated from the barges with the boom of cannon. Several of the Continentals fell, and others yelled with pain and fright.

"Stand ye're ground!" shouted Tim Cotton, sighting a musket. "Look to ye're flints, and hold ye're fire 'till they're well in shore!"

But the thin line shook, wavered, and with a wild, scattering fire broke anew. A fierce yell of triumph from the British boats completed the rout as the volunteers ran. Hubbard stamped the ground, speechless at so shameful a retreat, rushing after, shouting, and storming in vain to rally them.

The day and the cause were lost beyond recall it seemed to him. A few companies were coming up, and several horsemen at full gallop. Among the last he recognized, and his heart beat high, the big white

charger, and the figure of Washington spurring forward.

As he drew near the Commander-in-chief called to the fugitives, riding among them and urging them to stay their flight.

"Hold, men!" he cried. "Don't show your backs! Face the enemy and he'll not land!"

But he shouted to the winds. Entreaties and threats were alike to the panic-stricken Connecticut volunteers who ran like sheep, in all directions, seeking only to escape the foe. As the advance boats of the British reached the shore, a volley from those behind covered the first detachment, which sprang on the beach to form.

A mere handful of the Continentals stood their ground, the rest deaf to all efforts of the General and his staff. Washington pleaded with them in vain. He grew white with vexation and rage. His eyes flamed with wrath at this spectacle, when a determined stand must have driven the enemy from the landing. He rode upon the runaways, striking them with the flat of his sword.

Hubbard furious, barely escaped being ridden down by the white steed, only to be caught and thrown violently back by the rider, who denounced him with terrible imprecations for a poltroon.

"My God!" cried Washington, huskily, bringing his horse to stand with red and distended nostrils, in the midst of the little group of officers. He flung down his hat to the ground in anger and despair.

"Are these the cowards with whom we are to fight

for the liberties of the country!" he exclaimed. "Who will ride with me to-day, and end this fool's play!——"

The damp locks clung to his pale forehead. His face blazed with set purpose, as he dashed spurs into the animal's flanks, wheeling its head to ride on certain death. The white charger leaped forward foaming and snorting with pain, as the hairy red arm of Corporal Tim Cotton, like a bar of weathered iron, grasped the bridle, stiffened, and checked the maddened beast.

"Off, man!" cried the Chief; "or by God I'll split your carrotty head!"

His sword swung upward with the threat. The Marblehead boatman did not flinch beneath the fierce eye of the commander or relinquish his vise-like grip. The hot sun pouring down on his shocky head sent the perspiration oozing in little rills through the network of creases that furrowed his features.

"Gineral," rolled his deep bass; "the Scriptures says the Lord God Almighty swore in his wrath, but he never flung hisself into the arms of Bilzebub."

General Putnam galloped up in his shirt sleeves, bareheaded, his bald scalp glistening pink and babe-like in the sun-light. Parsons, Fellows, Leitch, Cadwallader, and Knowlton, rushed to the Commander-in-chief,—but the sword had descended peacefully to his side.

"Fall back, gentlemen, to the Post Road," he directed in a subdued voice.

"Ther's two rigiments and a battery on the road," said Putnam.

"It will not do, General; the enemy is already landing in Turtle Cove yonder. What troops are still below?"

"Part of Silliman's brigade under Colonel Knox, with Hamilton's Battery," replied General Putnam.

"They will be cut off should Howe push a line across the island. If you can reach them, Corporal Cotton," said Washington, turning to him, "they may yet be brought through."

"Major Burr starts at once with orders for Knox to join us," said Putnam. "He is strongly posted at Bayard Hill."

"Twill count little against the whole British army, but orders may reach him in half an hour——. Form your line on the Post Road, General, and hold it open a few hours if possible, until they can get through—. Push the wagons and supplies on to the heights. Keep me fully informed. I will remain yonder near the Murray House till further notice."

Washington turned his horse waiting to see that the group remaining of the Connecticut volunteers were marching to the Post Road before he rejoined the rest of his staff within the American lines.

A familiar voice greeted Hubbard as he toiled, hot and excited, up the ascent, and Major Aaron Burr reining up his horse, bent forward clapping his friend on the shoulder, and hailing him with an air of suppressed excitement:

"Glad to see you once more, Hubbard," he exclaimed. "Whither bound?"

"Anywhere to report for duty," replied his friend.

"Report then to me; I'll have you a horse," and leaning forward in a confidential voice, he continued: "I go back to town. The army has evacuated, but a rear guard of Silliman's Brigade, under Knox, is yet at Bayard Hill. We must get them out before the British land and cut our lines."

"If I had my sword and uniform from the Kennedy House," lamented the Lieutenant.

"You may get them yet—there will be time," and bending still lower: "I shall stop at Richmond Hill where Miss Moncrieffe is waiting for me. She has consented, Hubbard, my boy. We are to be married to-morrow at the first opportunity. I shall hold you for the best man."

"'Tis a bargain," returned his friend; "and the first kiss from the bride."

Corporal Cotton, mounted on a raw-boned roan mare, called to them that General Putnam was making inquiry for Major Burr. They followed him to the shade of an over-spreading oak beside the Post Road.

Washington and several officers were there; his face still pale, and a twitching of the muscles of the mouth from the recent excitement. His directions were subdued though cheerful, with a shade of languor and melancholy that comes of an effort at mastery in strong natures, after an outburst of passion.

The Commander-in-chief rode on with the officers to a point of observation on Murray Hill. Major Burr having received final instructions from General Putnam, directed his friend to a horse that stood near without a rider. Hubbard leaped into the saddle with-

out question, and they started down the road, Corporal Cotton joining them.

"Three heads is better than one," observed the Corporal, "if we happen to meet some of them Dutch Heshins."

All the morning and the previous day the crowds had been pouring out from the deserted city. Their course was at first slow. The Post Road was thronged with vehicles loaded down to point of breakage with household goods. Men, women and children on horse and foot were pushing along the hot and dusty turnpike, whispering of terrors behind—red-coated British, and fierce, bearded Hessian; the city to be bombarded and destroyed, like Sodom, by fire. But the obstructions lessened with their advance, indicating that New York was at last being emptied of its dwellers.

"Some belated passion comes apace down Love's Lane, ahead of us," remarked Major Burr at a rapid clatter of hoofs and a trail of dust from that shaded thoroughfare to their right.

A black chestnut steed leaped out of the dust from the Lane, ridden by a woman, recognized at a glance as Lady Claremont. She drew up her horse at sight of them so suddenly, that it reared upright, she retaining her seat with the skill and grace of a perfect horsewoman. Her look distinguished him, Hubbard felt—with pulse stirred anew, though she gave no indication.

"Do you know, gentlemen, if General Washington is still in town?" she asked with recognition of their salute.

"He is with the army up the island," replied Major Burr.

"He has not been captured, as 'tis rumored?"

"We saw him but a few moments since, ride with his staff toward the Inclenberg."

An expression of relief, it seemed to Hubbard, passed over her face.

"Will you not meet with British troops in this direction, young gentlemen?"

"Our orders take us in this direction, madam," said Major Burr, politely.

She touched her horse, inclining her head in response as it sprang forward. Out of the dust from the same direction, before they could give their animals the rein, spurred another fierce rider who hailed them at sight.

"I am after you, Major Burr," called Colonel Conway, coming up abreast.

"We are bound for town on special service," returned Major Burr.

"Was it not a woman who just passed on horse?"

"It was the Lady Claremont."

"Ah," returned Conway, and continued; "I, too, have a special, private mission back to town, for my papers left at Fraunce's Tavern, ere Howe takes rooms there."

"I have a private as well as an official mission to perform," said Major Aaron Burr.

"I should like much to get my uniform from headquarters," added Hubbard.

"And have you, Corporal," said Conway, "a private service that takes you to town?"

"Waal," drawled the Marblehead man, "my brother Josier left his privet paowder horn daown at Bayard Hill. He presarved thet paowder flask from our old black caow, Betsy, when we fatted her for beef. It was all drawed over with picters, too. Josier, ~~he~~ wouldn't like to lose thet paowder horn."

A cannon boomed from one of the British frigates in the East river above. It was taken up by the line of warships, and appeared to roll in concert down the stream in a general cannonade around the island.

"D'ye hear!" exclaimed Conway. "My Lord Howe has opened the ball. Let's keep step to the music." And the little cavalcade spurred on its horses at greater speed.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A LUNCHEON AT MURRAY HILL.

That Sunday, September fifteenth, was a stirring day all over New York island. What with the thunder of guns from British ships, soldiers tramping with heavy trains, women and children crowding the roadways and fainting with fright and panic in the hot dust and sun—the whole island was in tumult, and this town of York has never seen so great a peril.

After the Long Island defeat the British had hoped the punishment would bring the rebel leaders to terms. But no such indication appeared, and Sir William Howe followed up his first success after two weeks waiting, satisfied that the time had come for the blow that would bring these wrong-headed Yankees to their senses.

Washington had been steadily transferring ammunition and supplies while negotiations were in progress, preferring to see them securely lodged on the island heights out of the enemy's reach, where his diminishing army could not be suddenly overwhelmed, and could hold its own against odds. The burning of the town had been advised, but Congress hesitated to sacrifice the most important port on the coast, and with its route to the interior kept open, the army could fight or retreat as the occasion offered.

The Commander-in-chief had been up since daylight directing the disposition of the troops on Haerlem Heights. The evacuation of the city was nearly complete and would be finished before night. On his return the first intimation of a British landing had brought him at a gallop down Breakneck Hill to take part in the disaster at Kip's Bay.

Washington regained his habitual self-control as he crossed with his staff of officers to Murray Hill, riding up the locust-shaded driveway from the Post Road to the house. The air though clear was sultry and depressing, but his bearing forced a cheerfulness from which those around him drew confidence, and a slight flush succeeded to the pallor of his face. A halt was made under a canopy of elms on the broad lawn before the Murray House, and Washington dispatched expresses to Generals Heath and Greene, directing them to hurry up support to General Putnam.

A slight breeze swept the hill-top. There was a wide view of the river and the eastern slope of the island. The report of cannon from the British war-ships drew an exclamation from the group, among whom were Cadwallader, Humphries, Duer, Wayne, and Colonel Knowlton, the bold Connecticut Ranger, who held the picket fence at Bunker Hill. Under the cannon smoke they could see that barges loaded with British soldiers were being landed in force at different points along the stream. Bayard Hill being shut from view below by intervening hills, the conditions in that vicinity could only be conjectured. Apart from the

booming cannon the air and all the country round was as quiet as a summer holiday—the sky, a cloudless, watery blue.

Washington sweeping the river with his glass expressed the fear that Howe would lose no time in stretching his lines across the island, and Cadwallader replied that the enemy could be depended on not to overheat himself on this sweltering day.

"Most of our troops are up, thank God," continued Washington. "But I was thinking of Knox and his detachment—a British prison will be for him a sorry Christmas. See yonder regiment of British foot, Colonel Wayne. We shall have to drill our men on such lines to give them confidence in themselves and their bayonets."

"We can do it, give us a little time," replied the officer, with firm conviction.

"If Howe does not hasten," Washington added, still following closely the enemy's movements, "and Knox does not lose his head as those recruits did this morning, there is still a chance—'tis now near noon."

"Young Burr has a clear head," observed Duer. "He may get them through by Green'ich."

"Our Connecticut recruits were new, General," said Knowlton, flushing. "They did badly, God knows, but Douglas says the British seemed to drop on them from the skies when the fog cleared. With the big frigates thundering at them they expected to be swallowed up at once. They all fell in again on the Post

Road. Give them another chance and I'll stand for it, they'll fight."

"Tis the fortune of war, Knowlton," Washington returned. "I doubt if the men should be blamed. Brave soldiers, like yourself, come from Connecticut."

"The birds wear British colors to-day," said Cadwallader. "Hear these red-winged blackbirds chatter over our heads!—

'Four and twenty blackbirds baked in a pie?'"

"We'll have a finger in that dainty dish to set before the King," Knowlton responded, grimly. "They fly south, which means departure. We'll send all the red coats that way presently—or die in the attempt."

"A bold stand will hold long after us, even though we fall," said Washington. "Good morning, Friend Murray," he added, as a rugged, elderly man, in broad-rimmed hat, and drab Quaker coat, approaching, waited at a little distance, respectfully, to address him.

"Your Excellency," said Mr. Murray; "Mrs. Murray will esteem it a great honor, if thou and thine officers will partake of the humble refreshment that our house offers."

"Thank you, Friend Murray," returned Washington. "I doubt not these gentlemen have stomachs for food. A soldier must never fail to eat when he can, for he knows not when he may wish to and cannot."

The alacrity with which they left their saddles was sufficient answer. On the broad, pillared porch of this spacious white mansion, Mrs. Murray, in her plain

garb of silver gray, her hair of the same hue brushed back from her cheerful, open face, received the party with a warm welcome, and an anxious glance at the Commander-in-chief. Miss Polly Murray, with graceful curtesy, her brown eyes glowing with excitement, though her cheeks were paler than usual, ushered them into the large, cool dining hall of the Inclenberg, whose generous hospitality was a by-word in New York.

"Yours is a fresh assurance, madam," said the Commander to his hostess, "that in retreat we have not lost the confidence of our countrywomen."

"'Tis not he who retreats wisely, we know full well, your Excellency," replied she, "that is always worsted in battle. But art thou truly unhurt? There came grave rumors, but a moment since, that thou hadst been captured or slain."

"I am yet free and sound in body," replied Washington.

"The Lord be praised!" responded Robert Murray's deep bass. "While thou art secure our country's cause and liberties shall be safe."

Washington bowed his head respectfully.

A luncheon of cold fowl, and loaves of cream-white bread, the hostess' own, with nuts and wine, had been set forth bountifully, upon the massive mahogany table with its great claw feet. On the clean, white cloth clusters of purple asters, golden-rod and field flowers, and maple foliage just turning with vivid crimsons, imparted a sense of cheer and a refreshing coolness, after the heated air without. Around the table were

ranged the heavy mahogany chairs on the polished floor, brightened with woolen rugs, Mrs. Murray's handiwork. From the walls portraits of William Penn, Pitt, and Dr. Benjamin Franklin looked kindly down upon the guests.

Mrs. Murray and her daughters served the guests, placing before them the choice Madeira from the Murray cellars, while expressing regret that the regular noonday meal was not served. A clatter without announced a fresh arrival before the company had barely touched their glasses. An express sprang upon the porch in haste, and appeared at the entrance of the dining-room.

"General Putnam, your Excellency," he exclaimed in a breath, "bids me tell you the British are landing in strong force, pushing back our lines to the Bloomingdale Road! They advance in this direction."

A discharge of musketry not far away, caused the company to start from their seats.

"Has Silliman's Brigade been heard from?" asked Washington.

"Part of it has arrived, but Captain Selden and part of his command are reported captured. Colonel Knox had not left Bayard Hill at ten o'clock."

"We must be moving, gentlemen—'tis but a beggarly acknowledgment, madam, thus to snatch a mouthful and run. I hoped that they would not so soon follow us up—that is no bugle of ours!"—

A bugle strain rang out clearly at no great distance.

"'Tis a British horn!" exclaimed Cadwallader.

"We have no time to lose."

Other steps were heard on the porch, and the slender figure of Lady Claremont appeared in the doorway before them at the entrance.

"Do not pass this way!" she cried in tones which, though subdued, did not conceal their tremor, or the agitation that gleamed from her dark eyes. "Sir William Howe, with a troop of horse and foot, comes up the lane."

From the entrance could be seen the trappings of a large company approaching. The express said that the horses of the American officers had been taken to the back of the house where a private way led north to the Bloomingdale Road. Miss Polly Murray quickly indicated a side hall to the rear of the building, leading the way, followed by the officers. Washington lingered, taking the hand of his host, and of Mrs. Murray, bidding them farewell.

"God be with thee, George Washington. Trust thee in His keeping!" exclaimed she earnestly, her face showing with her words the depth of feeling, to which her husband added a fervent response, as the young Commander moved away.

"Your Excellency is not injured?" asked Lady Claremont, who had also lingered, and now walked beside him.

He started, as from a fit of abstraction, not having been conscious of her presence.

"I am not hurt. Why do you ask?" he replied.

"There were reports, as I came, that you had been shot or captured, or both."

"Do such rumors precede or foretell a fall?" said he, a smile unconsciously flitting for an instant, like a shadow over his face.

"Neither, I trust, your Excellency. They are but passing clouds from which the crowd draws ill portent,—afterward the sun and stars will shine."

"You speak kindly, madam, to one who leads a forlorn hope."

"Because your face is flushed and pale at moments, and your glance far and strained."

"Is it so bad! 'Tis only a passing passion, madam, of human vanity, that finds how little one man counts in the crowd and march of human events."

"One man may count more, I am sure, than many, in adverse times, when all minds are shaken."

"No one may fashion the world at pleasure. At best he can but strive to mould the clay in hand."

"Which is the true task, and the test of the workman," she replied. "You expected, and foretold reverses."

"They had not then come,—nor with them the need of holding ever a cheerful face, and confidence, from which every timid heart might draw resolve. The play had scarce begun then, and all were brave to act great parts. A fortnight has changed the scenes. Tomorrow it may be writ down in water:—a revolt crushed out by British arms."

"It will not be," she returned to him, a glow in her eyes. "I cannot think a noble purpose—an unselfish sacrifice for country and for man, will count naught.



"Lady Claremont stood watching when he had gone from sight."
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Yours is the right. Believe me there are times when a woman sees and feels more than trained and skillful men. I see that you will not fail. The years to come shall know and honor you."

Her words were spoken as of what had already been accomplished, carrying with them an assurance that aroused him from a lethargy. As they left the house he turned to her, looking earnestly into her eyes.

"I thank you, Lady Claremont," he said, "for calling me to myself and my duty with a woman's faith, which is ever an inspiration. The humors of the blood that flood the brain when all is yet untried, swell its confidence and conceits;—they clog and drag it in adversity, when it appears how small a place he holds."

"Will it aid you," she asked, with the thought, "if Sir William Howe and his staff, were to be detained here for a little?"

"Every moment is of value, madam——"

"I think it may be done," she said, thoughtfully, as he turned away—"No—! Not that way!" she exclaimed. "You will be seen from the house—cross yonder cornfield to the road below— Your Excellency may camp on Haerlem Heights to-night, where my house on the riverside is at your disposal."

The Commander lifted her white hand deferentially to his lips. Then he leaped lightly the fence separating the field, turning once to raise his hat as he disappeared on the hillside between the lanes of Indian corn that waved their russet tassels above his tall figure.

Lady Claremont stood watching when he had gone

from sight as a company of British soldiers rushed round the house from the front. An officer in the lead, stopped and greeted her courteously by name.

"We hoped that some rebel recruit might still be lingering, Lady Claremont," said he, in evident surprise at meeting her.

"They passed down the road but a few moments since, my Lord Percy," she replied, indicating the direction. "Have a care, my Lord, or you will run into a strong rebel, rear guard."

The soldiers dashed on while she sped back to the house, overtaking Miss Murray, by the way, and re-joining the family, who were preparing for the reception of the newly arrived guests.

General Washington crossed the cornfield with no difficulty, coming out on the Bloomingdale Road at the foot of the hill. His own officers, with General Greene and staff, were assembled at a little distance, in earnest conference. His prolonged absence had caused alarm, and a regiment of foot, Knowlton's Rangers, was eagerly awaiting orders to storm the hill to his rescue, if need be. His own white charger, held in leash, whinnied a recognition as he issued from the field of Indian corn.

"We had begun to fear, General," said Greene, with a breath of relief, "that you might have been overtaken and Colonel Knowlton proposed to surround the Murray House at once before Howe's command could come up."

"We might still do so," said that officer.

"No," returned Washington; "take no chances at this time. I crossed the corn to avoid notice," he continued, placing a hand in kindly recognition on the neck of his horse. "Are Miflin's troops at hand, General?"

"They hold the ravine at Fort Lee landing—the Hollow by Martje Davy's Fly. We have fallen back in good order to McGowans Pass. Where will you make camp to-night, General?"

"Keep the hills in easy touch at our backs," said Washington. "Show the enemy a bold front, but do not engage him, and give him no chance to run in on our flank. Do we occupy both sides of the ravine?"

"Only the northern height above the Hollow, where the works are complete—but both might be occupied."

"Is there not a residence on the southern height, Colonel Duer?" Washington asked.

"The home of Lady Claremont," replied Duer. "'Twould make convenient quarters."

"But the Hollow would divide our forces," the Commander-in-chief added, thoughtfully, "and we are taking no chances to-day, General."

"The northern height is a natural fortress of solid rock," said Greene. "We can hold it 'gainst ten times our number."

"And pile the gap with Dutch and British dead if they choose to come on," said Knowlton.

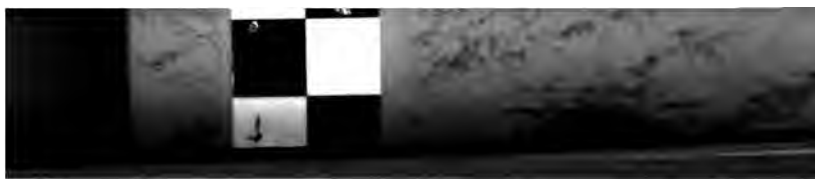
"You are in fierce battle-mood to-day, Colonel," replied Washington, smiling.

"Connecticut wants to wipe out Kip's Bay," re-

turned Knowlton. "We'll make this another Bunker Hill to be writ down Washington Height!"

"Where will your Excellency make headquarters?" asked General Greene.

"Why, in the field, to-night, for want of better," said Washington, swinging lightly to the saddle. "If we retire so far as the heights there is the Phillipse House. Send Putnam word to keep close watch on the west side from Green'ich, for Knox. I have strong hope of good report from him yet—Colonel Knowlton, will you ride on with me, and we may fix on a plan for the Rangers?"



CHAPTER XXIX.

'A GREAT BATTLE THAT WAS NOT FOUGHT.

Major Burr's little cavalcade rode down the Boston Post Road, four abreast and full of vigor, its ardor stimulated by the midday sun glowing as a furnace. Despite irregularities it presented a striking presence, issuing with clattering hoofs from great volumes of dust, and groups of fugitives looked after it with respect, swallowed the dust and forgot to grumble at the grievance.

The cannonade from the British ships was apparently a prelude by concert to a general fire along the line from the fleet. From Kip's Bay, where the guns opened, it was taken up around the town below, until the distant booming could be heard beyond to the right, on the Hudson.

"Lord Howe is spile'n a mighty sight of good paowder," remarked Corporal Cotton, as he urged his big-boned roan to keep pace with the party.

"'Tis to cover a general landing of troops," said the Chevalier Conway. "We are none too soon to hold the lead."

Burr and Conway, in complete regimentals, and the martial presence of the latter, atoned for de-

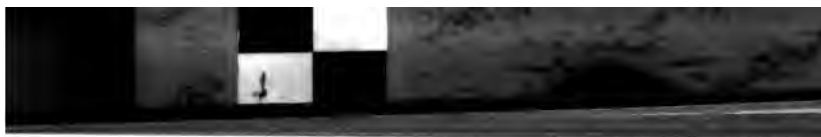
ficiencies in the file, and Major Burr yielded tacitly to the direction, superior rank and prestige of Conway. Lieutenant Hubbard, lamenting the absence of his uniform and sword, carried only a single pistol from the holsters of his borrowed horse. Corporal Tim Cotton retained the hickory staff that had served him for a boat hook, but his stalwart figure astride the gaunt steed was worth a troop of dragoons.

The Post Road became freer of fugitives to obstruct their progress, but one, breathless and perspiring, gesticulated wildly to them with incoherent cries as he ran. They could spare no time to pause, and at the turn where the Post Road widens into Bowery Lane, the burden of his shouts appeared, and the little company uttered a simultaneous exclamation.

A squad of Hessians was drawn up beside the roadway barely a hundred yards ahead, their peaked, brass helmets, and long cues identifying them at a glance. The soldiers had broken ranks, and were cooling their heads or resting upon their muskets for a breath. Their tallowed cues and moustaches hung limp and oily after a warm scramble from the water front. In the middle of the road a mounted officer conversed with two other officers on foot beside him.

The situation was taken at a glance, the enemy not less surprised at the appearance of the Americans. Evidently it was an advance detachment of a larger party, which, though not in sight, could not be far away.

"*Sacre Dieu!*" shouted Conway. "We are in for it.



Keep well together and ride them through. Those who make it, spur on to the fort!"

He drew his sword, bracing himself in the saddle and striking spurs fiercely into the flanks of the horse. His companions pressed closely beside him as the Hessians, with the discipline of trained soldiers, fell into line at shout of command from the mounted officer, who wheeled his horse to meet the onset.

The Hessian order was to advance to the center of the road, where they would have presented a bristling barricade of bayonets to the foe, but their movement, though prompt, was slow and regular, by which the advancing horse profited. Before the phlegmatic Hessians, grasping their muskets, had moved a step, the enemy was upon them.

One officer went down with a pistol shot from Major Burr. The other struck wildly with his sword at Hubbard, cutting his bridle rein. Hubbard's pistol missing fire, with the butt of it he sent the officer reeling as he passed.

Conway, less fortunate, had singled out the mounted officer, who received him with a well directed pistol shot. Conway's horse, struck in a vital spot, reared wildly beside the Hessian steed. An expert horseman, Conway did not lose self-control. He delivered a crashing blow that must have cleft the officer's skull had it not glanced from the brass headpiece.

The force was sufficient to tumble the Hessian leader, half stunned, from his saddle. Conway slipped from the back of his own wounded animal as it fell,

seized his opponent's horse, and vaulted into the empty seat. A soldier, who rushed forward, was struck down, and a bound carried Conway beyond reach.

Corporal Cotton, in the brief interval, had occupied the soldiers and diverted attention from their leaders. He ran the gauntlet with equal success though several Hessians sprang forward to intercept him. Two of them fell with broken heads beneath his stout hickory staff, but a third caught his horse's bridle and clung to it. The big roan dragged the soldier from his feet without slackening its pace, and the Corporal bending forward caught the man by the neck, lifting him across his saddle. The soldier struggled frantically to free himself, and the Marblehead boatman reaching his companions, tossed his prisoner into a thicket by the roadside, remarking with great disgust,

"Them Dutckerman's heads is so iley with mutton taller I was afeered he'd slip through my fingers."

They had checked their pace to await him, and a command from the Hessian leader, who had regained his feet, reached them as they rode on, with the rattle of muskets and the clicking of locks. A scattering volley roared behind, the bullets whistling wide of the mark over head. Before another fire the party was at a safe distance, recounting as it rode the list of casualties, which footed up: one dead horse, offset by the captured animal, and the bridle rein of Hubbard's horse cut, but his steed under control.

A sharp gallop brought them to the foot of Bayard Hill, where they left the Post Road, urging the horses

up the ascent, when a command from the works called a halt.

"Friends!" called back Major Burr, "from General Putnam, with orders."

They were admitted through the sally port, Colonel Knox advancing to meet them. The handsome features of this soldier were grave and resolute with determination as he returned the salute of Major Burr, who sprang from his horse. Among the group of officers gathered at a little distance Hubbard at once made out Captain Hamilton. A file of soldiers were drawn up behind. The fort was manned by over a thousand men, gathered within on all sides, and all looks were now directed on the arrivals.

Bayard Hill, the most formidable of the star forts thrown up by the Colonial troops in the suburbs of the town, had been christened "Bunker Hill," in memory of the Boston fight. It was the highest prominence on the lower end of the island. The trees had been leveled on the precipitate slope to the north and east whence an assault was most probable, and its batteries from seven angles commanded the town and the East River front, sweeping the country to the north along the Post Road with its guns. Before Long Island the redoubt mounted eighteen cannon, some of them carrying across the East River, that flowed less than a mile away, but they had not been replaced since, and during the week most of the stores and ammunition had been removed to Haerlem Heights.

"What is the latest up the island?" asked Colonel Knox.

"General Putnam directs that you abandon these works and join him as speedily as possible," replied Major Burr, delivering the orders.

"You see that is no longer possible," said Colonel Knox, pointing back over their course on the Post Road.

From the height the point of their encounter with the Hessians could be distinctly seen. It was swarming now with British troops. Fresh detachments were being landed on the river front, and battalions were marching up to join those already on the road.

"Begad! it was a close shave for us," said Conway.

"It would be madness to attempt to get through them now," returned Colonel Knox.

"But you'll not surrender, Colonel, without a shot at those damned Waldeckers?"

"Not while a flint and a musket remains," Colonel Knox replied. "These works were not christened Bunker Hill for naught. We'll fire a shot to-day, friends, that shall ring around the world!"

"You're a man after my own heart, Colonel!" cried the Chevalier Conway. "And the men will stand,—and you have the ball and powder, we'll give Sir William a brave salute."

"We have two guns of Captain Hamilton's Battery and ten thousand musket rounds."

"Quite enough, my dear Colonel. If the four of us

could ride down a company—St. Patrick! you have a force here to lay low the British army!”

“I have put it to my command,” returned Colonel Knox; “giving all who wish the permission to go. Not a man has shown the white feather. If you’ll join us, gentlemen, I promise you a brave fight that will be writ down in history. Independence still lives if all the Greeks are dead! We shall rouse the country with a new Thermopylæ to-day. Show tyrants how Americans can fight, and, if need be, how to die, for their rights and liberties!”

The trumpet tones of Colonel Knox were greeted with a cheer from the officers, caught up and echoed by the men in the works with a shout. Hubbard turned to greet Hamilton, whose animated features reflected the patriotic enthusiasm of his chief. Major Burr alone was not carried off his feet by this resolve.

“I am not anxious to be killed, Colonel,” he exclaimed, when he could secure attention. “You will have the whole British army on you within two hours.”

“Would you have us surrender, like cowards, without a blow, sir?”

“I am no coward, sir,” replied Major Burr, his black eyes snapping; “but to my mind a single live Continental soldier is worth to the country a stack of bones and carcasses. What use is a sacrifice when we may elude the enemy before he hems us in?”

“What can you do to prevent it, Major Burr?”

“I would not wait for them to come.”

"Had we wings we might fly. We have no boats, and you see the harbor is filled with British ships."

"They have not yet crossed the island. The way is clear and Washington will hold them back until we pass."

"If we could make it," mused Colonel Knox, the heroic setting of his features relaxing. "But we do not know the west side roads—if there are roads. And to leave this defense we might be caught like rats in a trap."

"We can still fight and die," Burr replied, with equal resolution. "These works are not bomb proof, sir. I could batter them into pieces with a single howitzer. What chance will there be against the enemy's heavy guns? Back of yonder sand hills a road leads through the Bleecker property, over Minetta Brook, and behind Sir Peter Warren's place, into Green'ich. I know the country well, I assure you, sir. Its groves and winding valleys will hide our movements from the enemy, and with an hour's start we shall be in Bloomingdale before they know we have gone."

"Faith, you give me new hope, Major Burr," said Colonel Knox. "'Twill be difficult, though, getting our stores over those sand hills to the road you tell of, and I had rather fight, than burn them. What think you, Colonel Conway?"

"There's always chance to fight, one of those same Greeks you mentioned, did say,—'tis worth the risk."

This proposition held out a glimmer of hope. The course was determined, preparations begun at once,

and the patriotic garrison a moment since ready to sacrifice itself on the altar of liberty, turned its energies to effect a speedy retreat, and to escape if possible from the enemy.

A guard stationed on the redoubt in view of the British was to maintain a bold front, and to remain until the last moment while the stores were pushed over the sand hills, and up the island to Green'ich. Beyond the line of fire the enemy was gathering in force, as if to attempt a movement on the fort. Major Burr directed the line of march, and Hamilton's Battery, when all was under way, was to take the center of the column, to be available for any point of attack.

The artillery captain, fired with excitement and responsibility, was oblivious of earthly matters. Hubbard remarked with admiration his soldierly bearing, the outgrowth of a campaign.

"I am glad to see you back, Hubbard," Hamilton greeted him cordially, but with increased military dignity. "You have missed a great campaign, though."

"It must have been severe," replied the Lieutenant, with due humility at his own loss. "I was glad to hear you came through sound."

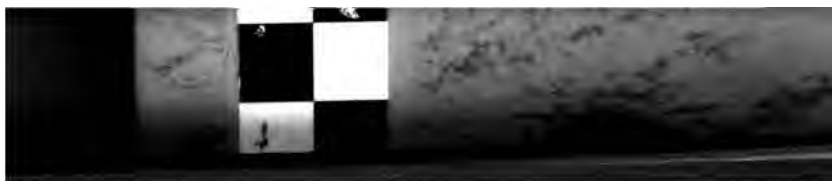
"Yes, it was quite a fight," replied the veteran on consideration; "but a most sad and unfortunate affair for our country. You are coming with us?"

Hubbard repeated his intention of going into town to secure if possible his uniform, which Hamilton thought still remained at the Kennedy House with

some effects of his own for which he had been unable to return. Conway now galloped away to complete his mission, and Captain Hamilton's attention was called to look after the disposition of his battery.

Hubbard was about to follow the Chevalier Conway when Major Burr called to him. There was a nervous tremor in his voice noted by his friend, that had not been present at any time that morning. Burr hastily explained that it might be difficult, perhaps impossible, until too late, for him to leave the column which was depending upon his knowledge to pilot it safely to the road beyond the sand hills. Meanwhile there was a little woman who would be waiting and watching in vain for him. Would Hubbard stop on his return for Miss Moncrieffe? And if Burr had not been able to get to Richmond Hill, would he escort her, rejoining the line at Green'ich?

Surely he would. At twenty all men are brothers, whatever they may become from the strifes and rivalries of later life. Love and war cement these early bonds of fraternity. Major Burr wrung the hand of his friend in silent gratitude as they parted, he riding forward where the stores were already pulling over the sand hills.



CHAPTER XXX.

THE FORTUNES OF LOVE.

Lieutenant Hubbard, spurring forward to overtake Colonel Conway, made rapid mental calculation that in fifteen minutes he could easily cover the distance to the Kennedy House on the Bowling Green. Fifteen minutes more would be sufficient to secure his uniform and transform himself; allowing for another fifteen minutes' interval at Richmond Hill, an hour's time would be ample by which he could rejoin the retreating column of Colonel Knox, and participate in any defense that it might be called upon to make.

There were no indications that the British had yet landed in the lower part of the city, and Lieutenant Hubbard was deeply set on the recovery of his sword and his sky-blue uniform, as essential for a bold, soldierly front in the crisis now at hand. Conway had so diligently employed the few moments in advance that when Hubbard reached the jail on the Commons, he caught but a glimpse of that officer on Nassau Lane beyond.

Hubbard followed the line on Broad Way Street as the more direct to his own destination. Except at intervals, the firing had ceased from the British ships.

The streets of the town were deserted. Here and there a solitary wayfarer at the sound of his approach, would quickly disappear down a side lane with a furtive glance over the shoulder, or retreat hurriedly within doors, barring the entrance behind him. Shops were closed and securely fastened, Hubbard remarked, Sunday not having had more general observance in the town for many a day, since its military occupation. Shutters of private houses were drawn, or the windows darkened as though a plague had swept and carried away every vestige of life, this absolute desertion being broken only by a passing glimpse of a frightened face on the dark background of some of the windows.

Behind the painted picket of Trinity Churchyard, on the fresh piled earth of a newly dug grave, a spade was still lying—a child's grave, it seemed, at which Hubbard wondered, catching sight the same instant of a strange object protruding from behind a monument near the grave, that further aroused his curiosity. He checked his horse, turning quickly, to ride back upon the walk beside the picket.

The object, a broad, dark figure, covered with curious protuberances, had come out from the monument. Seeing Hubbard's return it made a futile effort to regain its place of concealment, but being loaded down with its strange burden, it was unable to move, but stood fixed and staring at Hubbard—a round head which he identified as belonging to Billy, Sam Fraunce's black servant, the white teeth and the whites of the eyes in contrast with the grewsome bronze

heads, glittering brass knobs and other ornaments, suspended about his waist and shoulders.

"What on earth are you up to, Billy?" he asked, perceiving that these ornaments were a collection of brass knobs and door knockers, with which it was the old Dutch custom to decorate the doorways of homes in the town.

"I'se jes' gwine to berry dem in de earth, Massa Hubbard, sure. Jes' a little fun'al ob my own," replied the negro with a broad grin.

"Bury them?"

"I'se took de job on my own 'count. Massa Fraunce he done gone, and dey promises me a shillin' fur ebery one ob dem nobbs and knockers I take off and berry. I'se dug be grabe, and gwine to drop 'em in 'fore dem Britishers arribe. Spec' dey neber look into chile's grabe for sech val'bles."

"You'll have to hurry then," replied Hubbard, turning away.

"I'se flyin' sah," said Billy, loosening and dropping a cluster of his ornaments into the pit. "'Case I'se got to hurry up to Richmond Hill an' take a young lady sailin' on de ribber dis fine day."

"What's that!" asked Hubbard, pulling up; "to Richmond Hill, do you say?"

"Dat's anoder job," said Billy. "Lots o' jobs for cullud pussons when white folks leab town so suddin."

"Who is the young lady?" inquired the Lieutenant.

But Billy either could not or would not contribute further information on this point. He had promised

to come up to Richmond Hill to row a young lady—over to the Jersey shore—he expected; and he had a horse hitched beyond the churchyard to carry him as speedily as possible.

Hubbard went on to the Kennedy House. He picketed his horse and rushed into the building, which was deserted. A glance around the room he had occupied was enough to show that his errand was fruitless. There was no trace of the uniform, and after a search of every likely corner, he abandoned all expectation of recovery. This conclusion was hastened by the voices of a large boat party that he could see from a window of the house—a company of British landing at Fort William from a ship off the Battery.

Springing upon his horse the Lieutenant returned by way of Fraunce's Tavern in Broad Street, to warn Conway of the British landing. The warship by way of salute discharged several shots in his direction, one of which crashed through the tavern roof as Hubbard reached the corner. An old woman in the house told him that Conway had been gone fully ten minutes.

Hubbard crossed to the Green'ich Road at a pace that made up for all delays,—not without a stinging sense of regret as he galloped along the beach, its associations recalling memories of his evening walk on that course, a few weeks before.

As he drew near Richmond Hill Billy's statement that he was to row a young lady over the river from that point recurred to him. A boat at the landing had a figure in it, that in the distance appeared to be the



negro's, indicating that Billy had buried his treasure, and was on hand to attend to the other task.

At the entrance to the grounds Hubbard encountered Major Aaron Burr coming down the drive at a furious pace.

"Did you see her, Hubbard?" he called excitedly, reining up, and without waiting reply: "She had given me up! They say at the house she has gone to take a boat on the river. Quick, we shall overtake her!" He dashed on and Hubbard followed.

As they neared the beach landing the trim figure of the young woman was seen approaching it. Billy at the end of the dock was seated in the boat—a box and trunk securely corded, were piled and waiting on the landing. The little lady was daintily attired in a light costume, her short skirts displaying the silk clocks on a neatly turned ankle. A light wrap rested on one arm, and several stray curls had escaped confinement beneath the broad rim of her scuttle bonnet. Her bright face was flushed, her eyes sparkling with excitement as she directed Billy to transfer the box and trunk to the boat, cautioning him in a voice of severe authority, to place them with great care where the salt water should not sprinkle and soil her choice silk gown.

Absorbed in these directions she had not heeded the approach of Major Burr and his friend. Burr, springing from his horse, threw the bridle to Hubbard and advanced with a reproachful expression.

"This was unkind, Margie. Have you so little trust that I will keep my promises?"

"How you startled me!" she cried, with a little laugh that was hysterical, at the sound of his voice.

"I told you that I would not fail."

"'Twas so late," she tapped the ground nervously with one small foot.

"I was delayed by the British landing."

"And they told me the British had landed above. I thought you could not come, save at the risk of your life."

"That would have been slight risk for your sake, Margie."

Her expression became more serious than was her wont.

"Never mind now, dear," he took her hand tenderly. "We have not the time; and we'll not quarrel without cause. I have a pillion behind my saddle, and we may ride together. If I am called away our friend, Lieutenant Hubbard, has promised to remain with you."

"You are ever being taken away," she pouted prettily, holding down her head.

"Only for a little, dear. You will tire with having so much of me when we are married. Let's not delay, darling. There's no telling what may happen, and I shall be looked for by Colonel Knox."

"But my bonnets and best frocks are in these boxes. What will become of them?"

"Billy shall take them up the river. I would not have you run that chance, to-day."

"Major Burr," said the maid with sudden resolution; "you will not be very angry with me if I tell you something—something that may be unpleasant?"

"How could I?" he bent forward, kissing each rosy cheek within the broad bonnet.

"You are sure that you will not feel very badly?"

"Of course not. Tell it me as we ride, Margie, for I must be getting back."

"I was not going up the river at all."

"You were not? Where then were you going, Chatterbox?"

"I was to be rowed down yonder to the warship, Asia."

"You were going to the Asia!"

"My father, Major Moncrieffe, you know, is aboard her."

"And you were going to your father," said Burr, a tremor in his voice. "You then thought I would not come. Perhaps you were right,—but you do not now——"

"I have thought it all over since yesterday," returned the young woman, firmly, but the flush had left her cheek. "Won't you hear me? I do not wish to displease my father."

She paused at the expression on his face.

"Oh, do not look at me that way, dear, or I can never tell you."

"You wish your promise back. You no longer care for me," he said hoarsely.

"Oh, that is not true! How can I ever forget you, my first love?"

"You said nothing of this yesterday."

"General Putnam said it was best, and that I ought not to marry without my father's consent. He thinks I should return to him first."

"I have a letter from the General on that, Margie. He gives his consent."

Burr gave to her a note that Hubbard had seen the General hand him.

"Oh, no!" she cried, with a glance, and holding it for him to read. "'Tis addressed to my father: 'Major Moncrieffe, of His Majesty's Service.' See! It's not sealed, and 'tis writ in the good General's own spelling. I will read it."

She opened the note and read aloud with a merry laugh:

"General Putnam's complermints to Major Moncrieff. He presents him with a fine darter. If he don't leike her, he must send her back agin. And he will pervide her with a good Twig husband.' "

"ISRAEL PUTNUM."

But Major Burr's face was very white. He did not smile when she read the note.

"You have then decided, Margaret, to return to your father?"

"Oh, I must, my dear boy! How can you care for a light-headed simpleton like me! I shall only be a burden to you. And you are a soldier, and have your duty, and a great career. You will not miss me long——"

"No word of mine shall stay you, Margaret!" re-

turned Burr fiercely. "Remember that when you think of me. I am only a poor, rebel officer. I give you back your promise—all that you have given me!"

He tore the ring from his finger and extended it to her, but she struck it from his hand, threw her arms around his neck, the tears flowing from her eyes.

"I knew it would be so! I will go wherever you say," she cried. "But when you did not come this morning I thought 'twould not be so hard for either of us."

"It shall not be," replied he unclasping, gently, the soft, rounded arms from his neck. "I will not have you change your mind so. Say right now, Margaret,—decide for good and all—for both of us which it shall be: Go with me, or return to your father."

She looked into his face, then out upon the broad rippling river, where the tall frigate lay on the water;—at other boats skimming over the surface, and the white sea gulls wheeling low in graceful curves, before she made the reply that was to determine her own life.

"I will go to my father," she said in a low voice, catching a deep sigh.

The young officer leading her down to the boat, placed her tenderly in the seat at the stern, arranging her dress carefully to secure it from the wet. Her boxes were already in place. He kissed her and she burst into tears.

Major Burr stood looking after, as the distance widened between the shore and the boat—between him and her slender figure. There was still a chance, a

hope it may be, that some word or sign from her would direct its return, before the distance became a gap in their lives—impassable. The sun glinted on the water, a sobbing wave broke upon the beach. The tears, like dew, to disappear with the day, glistened from her long, dark lashes, that were turned to him as the boat glided along its way upon the tide.

"I fear that mine is an unlucky star," Burr said, turning to his friend with a bitter smile. "What I strive most for, and at my best, seems to fail me at the last moment."

His friend was too much affected to reply at the instant. Major Burr sprang to his horse with a set, pale face, dashing a hand to his eyes after a last glimpse on the river.

"Hubbard!" he cried wildly, "you are witness. I would have done aught under heaven for her. She will forget me in a day. Is it not the way of women? There's no reliance on their word. I swear to God I'll break heart over them no more! Come, we must spur now to be in at the death or the capture."

Hubbard's eyes were dim with moisture. Neither spoke, or looked back as they galloped away, at the little skiff now a mere speck on the water, pulling to the dark sides of the British frigate.




CHAPTER XXXI.

A SECOND LUNCHEON AT MURRAY HILL.

On rejoining the Murray family in the dining hall Lady Claremont confided to them her purpose of detaining, if possible, General Howe and his staff, who were then in possession of the lawn so recently occupied by Washington and his officers. Mrs. Murray and her daughter entered upon the project with ready tact and insight. Robert Murray, it was deemed best, should repair to the kitchen to hasten the arrangements for the noonday meal, leaving it to the ladies to complete the preparations, and entertain the visitors.

Along the shaded driveway leading to the mansion, and on the Post Road beyond, swords and bayonets, and helmets of brass flashed in the sun. The detachment of horse and foot that formed an escort to General Howe and his suite, and the dashing uniforms of red and gold, made a brilliant display before the house this September afternoon.

At first glance, in his bearing, Lord Howe presented a striking resemblance to the commander of the Colonial forces, and the dress of the period contributed to the likeness. The British general was approaching his fiftieth year, and though well preserved, his figure was heavier than Washington's, and his face, ruddier

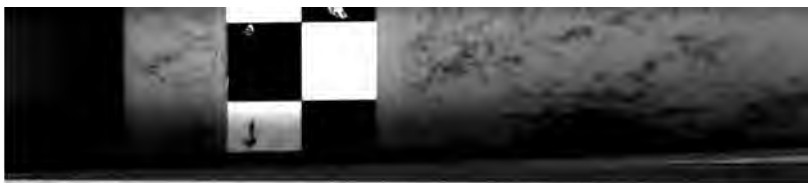


in color, indicated a life of greater ease and indulgence. With a military prestige not surpassed in Europe at that day, his commanding presence united with his record in the field to sustain this prestige.

A kinship to George III. and confidential relations with the court, were advantages possessed by Sir William and his brother, Lord Richard Howe, who commanded the British fleet, not lodged in other British subjects. They were believed to be in closer touch with the colonies, and more likely to reach a satisfactory settlement. Sir William was a Whig and had expressed sympathy with the colonists. When Earl Howe, his brother, had fallen in the late French war, the grief at his death was only second to that for Wolfe. New England, at its own expense, had recently raised a monument to him in Westminster, and the Howe family had held a warm place in their affections.

Sir William, then a dashing young officer, had led the charge at Quebec under Wolfe. At Bunker Hill he directed the assault on the Colonial works, refusing to retire until his officers had been shot down around him, and his feet were wet with their blood. In the family moods that he inherited, he was at times gloomy and reserved, but Sir William, at fifty, loved comfort, cheer and good company; his future fixed, glory when attended by personal exertion had lost its charm, if the humor did not suit him.

Sir Henry Clinton, his chief officer, also a professional soldier, brave and corpulent, had something



of his chief's regard for personal ease. General Percy was a more vigilant and determined campaigner; and Lord Cornwallis, young and confident, was entering upon a training in the colonies from which experience he profited afterward in other lands. Now the excitement, where the enemy went down before their disciplined troops, seemed a mimic war, more like the pleasures of the chase, than actual warfare.

There was also Governor Tryon, holding commission as a general, whose intimate acquaintance with the colonists, was regarded as invaluable. The Governor being fastidious in dress, was arrayed for this re-entry into the city of New York, in fashion—a gorgeous coat and waiscoat of latest cut, his queue secured in a lace peruke,—gold buckles at the knees and shoes, and his sword and equipments richly upholstered.

“What place do you call this, Governor?” asked General Howe, removing his hat to catch the breeze from the hillside.

“’Tis the Inclenberg, your Excellency; belonging to the Murrays, among the most wealthy and genteel Quakers of the town. They are well known to me.”

“Will they not find for us some show of entertainment?”

“Most assuredly, your Excellency. They are excellent people with well stocked cellars—a little partial to the rebels, I fear, but non-combatants, who will not hesitate to recognize the authority of His Majesty, George III.”

“If they will but recognize the need of a cool re-

freshment on the part of His Majesty's officers, we will not now inquire into their political opinions."

"Your Excellency, I see now the ladies at the entrance."

"Lead the way, Governor, with our compliments. My throat is turning to sole-leather— Oh, Percy! What now? How many Yankee rebels have you spit-
ted already, this grilling morning?"

"Will your Excellency send instructions to General Grant?" asked Lord Percy, coming up at the moment.

"He has my orders to push down and take the town. What more does he want?"

"There is reported to be a large detachment there in the works."

"The more the better. Hem them in, and we'll bring them to terms a little later."

"But they may yet escape us by back routes, your Excellency.

"Cool down that canker of yours for the moment, my Lord. After a breath we'll stretch our lines across the island, and hunt these provincials from their hill tops. 'Twas not in a day the world was made—by best authority, Percy. These Quakers, you say, Governor, have some fine women among them?"

"Ha, ha! Sir William. A trifle plain and sedate for your taste, I fear."

"We'll not balk at such trifles. Let them tender something cooling after this cursed, sticky heat, and they shall all be young and beautiful. Cornwallis broods there like Garrick in "Hamlet," and Sir Henry,

I doubt not, feels that his solid flesh is melting. Do your prettiest* for us, Governor."

Mrs. Murray received them with quiet, unaffected dignity on the steps of the white columned portico. Governor Tryon, with flourish, and hand upon his waistcoat, presented his distinguished company. Lord Howe, with the grace of manner that never failed to leave an agreeable impression when he wished it, expressed his profound regret that the fortunes of war should compel him to intrude upon their privacy.

"Our house and what we possess hath ever been at the command of His Majesty, Sir William Howe," Mrs. Murray replied. "Thou art in person, as his representative, alike welcome. Our table is being laid for the midday meal, and it will do us much honor if thou and thine officers will partake with us."

"My dear madam," replied General Howe, gallantly, "you tempt a soldier's appetite. I accept your courtesy with thanks for my officers and myself. May we ask if these ladies will not also honor us with their presence?" He turned with a deferential salute that changed to an expression of pleasure: "My Lady Claremont! I did not expect a surprise so agreeable."

"Have I not been long awaiting the arrival of His Majesty's troops?" she responded, advancing, and acknowledging the recognition of the gentlemen.

"Ah, madam, war is a rude respecter of persons when it requires even ladies to wait."

"I may now congratulate your Excellency on the recovery of the town of York for the British crown.

Mrs. Murray and myself are friends, and she will do all in her power to make you welcome."

"'Twill be an easy task, I assure you, madam. Hungry soldiers are not fastidious, and we know of your hospitality," said Lord Howe, as they entered the dining-room, where the table had been spread with the attractions of a full meal.

Mrs. Murray, as hostess, occupied her place at the head of the table with Lord Howe at her right and Lady Claremont next to him.

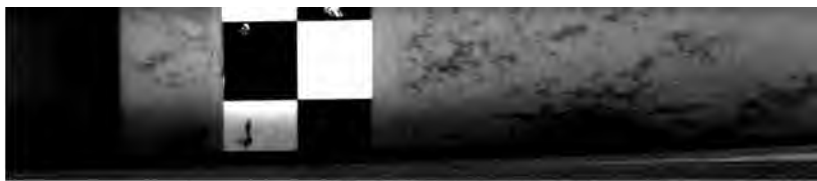
"I had begun to fear that you also had turned rebel," said he, turning presently to Lady Claremont, "as we no longer heard from you."

"Your Excellency had lost confidence in me?" she asked, raising her dark eyes.

"Not so, my dear lady. I have only given up hope, as I writ my sister yesterday, of accounting for the peculiarities of your sex. She has overwhelmed me with inquiries of you—there is a great packet of letters for you on ship—and I have told her that all is impenetrable mystery, and blank—I must have a word with you in private before I leave," he added in lower voice. "Whom have we here now?"

A stir without and the announcement of the new arrival brought Governor Tryon hastily to the entrance, greeting ceremoniously a ruddy-cheeked lad whose bright, open countenance appeared in the doorway.

"Permit me, ladies," cried the Governor with unction and profound flourish, "to present His High-



ness, Prince William Henry, a son of His Gracious Majesty, and heir, it may be, to the British throne."

Sir William Howe and his officers all arose to greet the young prince, who, under the care of Admiral Howe, was cruising with the fleet in Colonial waters, a mere lad, and one of the first of British princes to visit American shores.

"Your Highness, like your noble ancestors, is ever at the front," continued Governor Tryon.

"I am sent to the rear, and I protest, Sir William," replied the youth with a cloud upon his face.

"What is that?" asked General Howe. "Who has done this?"

"Colonel Simcoe has refused to permit me to accompany him where I knew there would be sport."

"Simcoe is an unruly officer, your Highness knows," replied the Commander with assumed severity. "I expect him to report here shortly, and I will reprimand him. Let me present the Lady Claremont, Prince Henry—can you hold him for a little?" he whispered, as the seats were arranged for the Prince, "as you hold so many of us."

"Will not your Highness have a slice of the cake?" asked Lady Claremont.

His Highness accepted a liberal slice with boyish gusto.

"Do you like the service in American waters so far from home?" she inquired.

"It's jollier than prayer service at home," replied the young Prince with a shrewd look. "Even the

parties there are awfully dull, you know—the Princes Amelia always wants to select the girls that a fellow is to dance with.”

Mrs. Murray’s exertions were to good purpose, the dinner calling forth many compliments from the English officers. Cornwallis assured Miss Polly Murray that he felt as if he were in an English country house at home, and Sir William Howe endorsed with his appreciation the Murray Madeira, as the choicest he had tasted in America, offering the health of the ladies, which was drunk heartily by the guests.

“Shall we not have a bout with these rebels, Sir William?” asked the Prince.

“Not if they keep their heels in motion,” returned the British General. “They outrun us since the drubbing on Long Island—perhaps your Highness will have a more hopeful answer of Miss Murray.”

That young lady, the flash of whose eye Sir William had playfully noted while speaking, flushed but did not reply, until she saw that an answer was awaited.

“Your Excellency as a soldier will admit, that the Americans did fight bravely at Long Island, if they did retreat,” she replied, her brown eyes sparkling.

“True and well spoken,” said General Howe. “I never saw stouter fight than those Baltimore Macaronies made. Grant had his hands full with them.”

“They fight like true English stock,” said Cornwallis; “but they are ill-drilled and foxy. ’Tis impossible to tell how they will double on you.”

"May they not learn soon, my Lord, to fight better, from the good example set them?" said Lady Claremont.

"These reverses will dishearten them," Sir Henry Clinton observed. "Your health, madam, and as an impartial critic what say you of our campaign?"

"As a wise critic I would prefer to hold my opinion, Sir Henry, till the campaign closes."

"You do not doubt England's ability to suppress this crude revolt, madam?"

"In England's ability, and your own, Sir Henry, I have implicit faith; but I question if you gentlemen do fully estimate the resources of the colonies, and the self-sacrifices the colonists will undergo, when put to it."

"They have surely enlisted the sympathies of the ladies," said Lord Cornwallis courteously.

"And is not that most important, my Lord? Women may not fight, but if they will maintain the homes, will not the husbands and sons be hard to conquer?"

"If these rebels would but face us in open fight, Sir Henry," said Governor Tryon turning to that officer, "we should soon bring them to terms."

"A pretty property Mr. Washington has on the Potomac, from what Lord Fairfax tells me?" returned Sir Henry.

"One of the best in the colonies—an estate well worth £100,000, I should say."

"You should know, Governor with your experience—and some good commissions."

"Trifles—much overrated, Sir Henry," Governor Tryon responded hastily and turning the subject—"Washington learned these foxy tricks on his Virginia plantation, but they will have little chance, as even Charles Fox admits, before trained English soldiers."

"Well, Mr. Washington has shown bad judgment in getting mixed with such company—there will be pretty pickings after all his pains and trouble."

"If these stupid rebels would stand long enough to read your tracts and sermons, Governor, and not light their pipes with them, we should have certain victory," observed Lord Percy to the general amusement.

"Have your little joke, gentlemen," returned Governor Tryon with a flush. "My tracts are loyal proclamations, that will yet prove as serviceable as your gun wads—I know well these people of the colonies."

"Ah, yes; but you are furnishing the rebels with gun wads—ammunition."

"Have you plenty of this ammunition, Governor?" asked Sir William, filling his glass.

"Several wagon loads for distribution, your Excellency, as soon as they may be unloaded from the ships."

"We will hasten them, and you may detach a company to help you get them ready for circulation, Governor. We may soon need them."

"Does your Excellency think that Washington is now beaten?" asked Lady Claremont.

"His chances are not bright, and give him due credit.

Mr. Washington may be no general, Sir Henry, but faith, he's the next thing to it. A general who knows how and when he can pack up and slip out, as he did over the river, is not to be despised. You cannot say when he is whipped. But I think our campaign now well at an end. Cornwallis may prepare his ship to carry home a Christmas budget to His Majesty."

"Let us drink to your Excellency's success," exclaimed Governor Tryon.

The glasses were filled and the toast drunk, after which Sir William passed out upon the porch with Lady Claremont, where they walked up and down conversing, while the officers remained in the dining room, awaiting the instructions of the Commander-in-chief.

"I have much to say to you," he said in a low voice. "Do you go back to town at once?"

"I had intended going down to the Walton House," Lady Claremont replied. "The Americans occupy the island about my home, from which I had expected some word."

"I will give you an escort to town," he continued. "The Kennedy House will be my quarters, and you can notify me there."

"I shall remain here until this evening," said she, "and will your Excellency kindly inform me if the enemy are occupying my place?"

This Lord Howe promised to do, adding with an inquiring glance as if to seek further meaning than her words might imply:

"Mr. Washington has not placed you on parole?"

"Oh, no. I am at entire liberty."

"I give him credit as a courtly gentleman; but did I not tell you, my lady, that this republican chieftain was another Cato, so set in patriotic virtues that even your charming presence would avail nothing—the Rev. Mr. Boucher, who was so confident, knowing him well, now admits it."

"I have found him a most courteous and intelligent gentleman, Sir William."

"In good truth?" he replied with another penetrating glance.

"But I do not think," she continued, "that you can look for advances on his part while there remains any fair prospects for his cause. If indeed, the outlook is as you intimated at the table—a general breaking up of the rebel cause—then he may be prevailed on to consider the situation as affecting the general welfare, but not, I am sure, while a reasonable chance remains."

"I would greatly prefer to treat with him than any other, not excepting Mr. Franklin, who is entirely too shrewd on such matters. It would certainly be to his advantage, as you can infer from Sir Henry's remarks—birds of prey are already in air."

"I do not believe, your Excellency, he would consider such advantages for himself."

"He may well do so when he finds that others are considering for him. There is already on foot among them a movement to displace him. His troops have been beaten on Long Island, and when they have been



driven from New York, you will see this Congress take a hand, and place another general in the field."

"Who do you think that will be, my Lord?"

"One cannot say where there are so many cooks in charge, but Charles Lee has come north and is preparing him for the honor, I am told."

"He is reputed the best trained soldier in the rebel army."

"A vaper who has done naught! I knew him in the French war, where he did nothing but pose and find fault with his superiors."

"Before going south," said Lady Claremont, "he assured me it was his conviction that only bad management on the part of the colonies could save them to England."

"And the management will be bad unless he directs it. I know not whether he is more the knave or a frothy fool, but I shall be more assured of the outcome with him in the saddle. On the other hand I believe that negotiations conducted through Washington, would be better received throughout the colonies, and of more lasting value to his Majesty's government. You are at liberty to present that expression from me, if you find that it will be useful—what is it now, my Lord Percy?"

"I believe we should lose no time in following the rebels, your Excellency."

"Let them run," replied Howe impatiently, his humor heavier after a full meal. "The pursuer has always the advantage of a short cut both for eye and scent—here now is Simcoe, broiling like a fiery fur-

nace. He heats the air. Have you run the game to its hole, Colonel?"

"A strong detachment of rebels is reported holding the works on the outskirts of town known as Bayard Hill," reported Colonel Simcoe, dusty and aflame from hot riding. "The heavy guns are ordered up, and a brigade is in hand to make the assault. It is said they will fight—I expected to hear the guns before this."

"Your Highness shall have an opportunity," said Sir William to the Prince. "We will ride that way presently. What further, Colonel Simcoe?"

"By pushing across the island on the Bloomingdale Road we may cut off this detachment should they retreat, your Excellency."

"That will suit Lord Percy here, who wants a sun-stroke. But breathe a moment, I advise you."

"Will you not have refreshments, Colonel Simcoe?" asked the demure Mistress Polly Murray.

"None, thanks—Ah, Lady Claremont! I did not know you were here?"

"You passed as if you still held the anger of two weeks since," replied that lady.

"I cannot be angry with you, you well know," returned the officer, and in a lower tone, "though you treat me, I had almost said, with bare courtesy."

"Why will you not allow woman her moods, Colonel Simcoe? You have your own. But I will make amends. Be seated, pray, and refresh yourself."

"I cannot stop now, there is too much before us."

"You protest, and it is now for me to plead!"



"Well, a glass of that cool punch. I feel that I am entitled to greater consideration from you, Lady Claremont."

"True, my friend—try a slice of this cold fowl. It is excellent—you have done for me more than I could expect. No brother—"

"I am no longer a brother! My brother, I have just heard, is dead these three months."

"Well, then, a dear friend who knows my shortcomings, and indulges me. Tell me of yourself, and what of the day?—Ah, then your brother's dead!"

General Howe and his officers were in consultation on the porch, and he yielded to her persuasions, responding to her questions as he ate, until General Percy, pacing impatiently to and fro before the doorway, looked in for the fifth time.

"I must be off or Percy will have seven fits," exclaimed Simcoe. "Why can you not always be so charming and agreeable, my lady?"

"Indeed, 'tis not you who are always so tractable, my friend," said she. "Adieu, Colonel, but have care; rebel bullets are no respecters of persons."

"I will for your sake," taking the hand she extended, "but the rebel bullet has not been moulded for me. Promise to keep so kind a mood till I see you again—why can you not?"

"And do you not know why?" she asked as he gazed passionately into her face—"There, Lord Percy will wait for you no longer."

"Push your troops across the island now, Lord

Percy," said General Howe. "Drive the foxes to the hills, to-night, and we'll get out bugle and hounds in the morning."

"I hope it is not too late," replied Percy.

"'Tis barely after three o'clock. The wind is veering east and cooling. The change is with us, my Lord; and you are not now overheated."

"The iron in our blood must be taken when it glows hot, your Excellency, to shape it for great events. There's always time for cold baths after—to fix the temper."

"You should always have a cold bath at hand, Percy, for the sparks are always flying from you—Ha! that sounds in earnest. We will all get under way!"

A heavy discharge of musketry was heard to the north and west of the house. A force of rebels was reported moving in that direction, and engaged by the British troops. The officers left the house hastily to join the troops that were marching to the sounds of the firing.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE FORTUNES OF WAR.

A brisk gallop from Richmond Hill brought Major Burr and Lieutenant Hubbard to the home of Admiral Sir Peter Warren, in the rear of which Colonel Knox's retreating column was to pass. The house, a white, rambling structure, on an eminence in a grove of fruit and shade trees, overlooked the beach. In the glen behind it was the route the column was to take, by which it would be concealed from the British vessels on the river. But they looked in vain for any of Knox's battalions.

"They should have passed before this," cried Burr excitedly. "What if they have already been captured?"

"That can hardly be," said Hubbard, scanning the ground for hoof prints. "Some have passed, but I see no trace of the wagons."

"I will ride on to Green'ich," said Burr, and, at the sound of an approaching horse from that direction:—"Some one comes who may tell us."

The rider appearing at the next moment was the Chevalier Conway. He greeted them, drawing up his horse, and inquiring for the remainder of the detachment.

"Where is the head of the column?" asked Burr.

Conway explained that he had left it a little distance beyond, anxious and waiting for the stores. Some delay was reported of them, and he was returning to find out the trouble. Burr repeated his intention of riding on to the front, and Hubbard accompanied Conway to learn the cause of the delay and report at once to Colonel Knox. The artillery was with the stores, Conway observed, and he feared that they might already have been bagged by the Hessians.

"We should have heard from them in that case," said Hubbard, remembering the determination of Hamilton.

"There's no telling the luck in war," returned Conway as they pushed along. "By the way, Hubbard, what came of your French friend, Bonvouloir?"

"I have not seen him these two weeks."

"A good sword, begad!—That infernal moonlight played the deuce with my eyes."

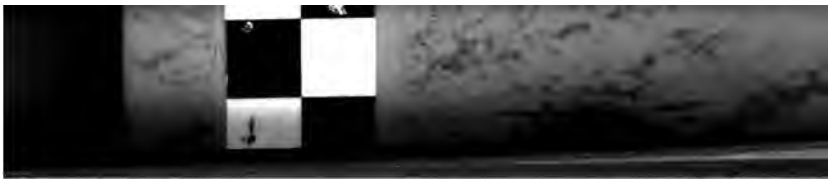
"You were not badly hurt?" returned Hubbard.

"A mere trifle—a scratch. This day is suffocating, and may prove hotter for some of us, should Howe cut us off beyond—you have a charge against me for a hundred or so, Lieutenant Hubbard."

"Don't mention it," replied the Lieutenant, surprised.

"Very good of you to say so, my boy,—which I shall remember, if luck ever comes my way again. You may do me another little service if aught should happen to-day, and I'll take it a mighty favor."

Hubbard stated his willingness to do anything in his



power, wondering at the same time at the importance, and the serious humor with which Conway presented this request.

"I have papers with me," continued Conway, "that I do not want to fall into British or unfriendly hands. If aught happens to me, I would like you to get them through, and give them to Charles Lee; but destroy them rather than let others get them. I rode back to Fraunce's for them—Ah, here is our detachment, mired!"

A busy scene was before them. In crossing Minetta Brook a small fordable stream, one of the wagons had stuck in the mire, choking the passage for all the rest. The whole detachment was still on the wrong side of the brook, with Captain Hamilton's two pieces of artillery.

On all sides soldiers and teamsters were working like beavers, and to good purpose, no time having been lost or spent idly. Captain Hamilton from the midst, in his shirt sleeves, his face flushed and stern with excitement and determination, issued instructions, and appeared to follow and direct every movement with a foresight and decision that inspired confidence.

A way had been cleared by a slight detour through trees and underbrush, to a point above the ford where the banks were higher and dryer. Only a short space of soft ground had to be crossed to reach it, and this was being paved with logs and underbrush, as a roadway for the wagons. One party had dragged the longer tree trunks to the stream, and bridged the banks.

This task was being finished as Conway and Hubbard rode up, under the lead and direction of Corporal Cotton.

"Ah!" cried Conway in admiration. "Good for your Yankee engineers. Where's the officer in charge?"

"Capt'n Hamilton's in charge," responded the Marblehead man, dropping the last timber into position, and drawing a stream of perspiration from his brow with one hand. "You can cross naow; and you'll find him daown by the ford pullin' out the waggins."

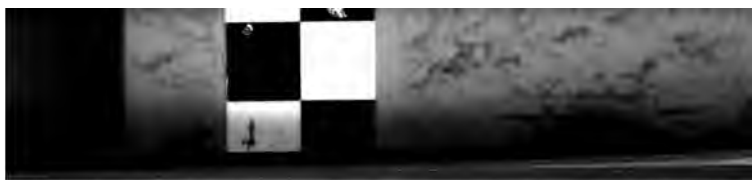
That task had also been successfully finished when they reached Hamilton. The wheels of the wagon, settling to the hubs, had been dug out, and half a dozen horses and a score of men uniting, drew the loaded truck to solid ground. The horses were now in motion following the other wagons to the bridge, and the two pieces of artillery were close behind.

"Call in the pickets!" ordered Hamilton with a passing salute to Conway and Hubbard. "And Hoyt, direct Corporal Cotton to lose no time in destroying the bridge when the guns are over."

The artillery captain turned to Conway with the conscious pride of a veteran in the pose of his slight figure, that Hubbard beheld with equal pride and admiration. His collar and ruffled shirt front were wilted and soiled, but his eyes flashed with triumph as the guns passed safely over the improvised bridge.

"The British will be down in this hole presently," remarked Conway.

"They may have the hole," replied Hamilton. "The



rear guard just in from Bayard Hill reports their preparation to assault those works."

"Give us another hour and we'll send our compliments," said Hubbard.

"We'll send them now if they come up," returned Hamilton, masterfully, and taking out his watch, he added: "Lieutenant Hubbard, will you take this express at once to Colonel Knox? Tell him we have been delayed just fifty-five minutes. The column is now in motion, and we will join him within fifteen minutes, every wagon, and the guns in line."

Hubbard rode ahead with his express. The line was now fully under way, and the engineers were already destroying the bridge over Minetta Brook as he left it behind. The air was close and sultry, but Colonel Knox to whom he delivered the dispatch a few minutes later, was confident that if not intercepted by the enemy they could join the main division at Bloomingdale within two hours.

Beyond Green'ich the road was exposed to the river by a low open stretch of nearly a mile, and it was feared that the column, if detected by the British ships, would draw their fire. The head of the column had halted in a hollow awaiting the wagons before issuing on the open meadow. Scouts reported all clear ahead, and with the arrival of the stores, the line moved forward under the lead of Major Burr.

The front ranks had crossed the open and struck in behind the low hills beyond, before the end of the line had issued from the hollow. The British war

frigates stood up the stream to draw near the shore, but the light breeze gave them little headway, and by the time they had tacked across the river and back, the rear ranks were well over the exposure. Some of the link and chain shot screamed overhead among the trees, but most of it fell short, striking the earth, and the Continentals shouted back their derision.

The route became barely more than a bridle path, winding through gulleys and around the bases of bare, huge rocky knolls too steep to surmount. Along this path the heavy wagons rolled and floundered, and when a more serious obstacle than usual was met, the soldiers put their shoulders to the wheels.

Their advance was steady, and the promise of success gave new confidence with each moment. Another half mile would bring them to the Bloomingdale Road, a full mile above the line of Kip's Bay, and unless the Continental forces had been driven back, the detachment would be looked for, and would receive support. A company of British foot appeared at this point, to the east in a depression that crossed the line of Knox's detachment. The head of the column had passed and the stores were coming up when the enemy were discovered by Hubbard, who gave the alarm.

It was a single platoon, and a company of the Americans, drawn up to oppose it, delivered a volley of musketry as the British were forming for a charge, and threw them back. Fresh detachments were then seen pushing forward up the defile in larger force. Colonel Knox galloped up at the sound of the firing, and di-



rected the troops to secure a rocky knoll that commanded the valley through which the enemy were approaching. He urged the officers to hold the British back to the last moment until the stores were well ahead, adding that Major Burr had secured communication with the main line, and they would presently have full support.

"Ah, Hamilton," he added, "if you could but place your guns on that rock yonder we would sweep the valley, and hold it against Howe's army."

Captain Hamilton looked disconsolate at the prospect. The slippery sides of the dome of hard, gneiss rock, offered no foothold for the horses, who were exhausted with their work and the heat.

"The men might pull them up," suggested Hubbard dubiously, as the guns arrived.

"I might putty near do it myself," observed Corporal Cotton, surveying the situation; "leastways, if the boys would give me a heist."

Suiting action to the word, he unhitched the horses and lifted one of the guns, depositing it on the opposite side of the stone wall at the foot of the knoll. In a trice the other piece was placed beside it, and the Corporal getting into the traces, a score of stout arms lent their aid, and both guns were presently in position on the rock.

It was not too soon, for the enemy were advancing in force along the defile, when a charge of grape from Hamilton's field pieces brought them to a stand. The guns were well supported by muskets, and the stores

were carried along safely in the meantime. The rear rank closed in behind them, and the battery was dragged down the knoll, Corporal Cotton again setting the guns over the stone wall.

A shout from ahead was repeated down the ranks as the gallant General Putnam galloped at a break-neck pace along the line. In his shirt sleeves, his waistcoat open, as of a day in the hay field, his sword suspended by a red hanger about his waist, flapped violently at every step of the horse. The doughty old warrior shouted encouragement, giving assurance that the whole Continental army was now at their backs and would support them against the British.

Bloomingdale Road was reached and the march became easier. Troops from Putnam's command fell in, and they moved back deliberately, as the enemy advanced with heavy force. This was kept at a respectable distance by the flash and bark of Hamilton's battery. Captain Hamilton directed and instructed the gunners with a skill and fortitude that reflected his studies in gunnery, as well as his recent experience in the Long Island battle.

"I should like to lead a charge among them, Hubbard!" cried Burr, riding up.

A clatter of horses a few moments later revealed a troop of dragoons, bearing down on their flank. Colonel Knox directed Hamilton to retire along the road while the foot held back this fresh assault.

Checked for the time, the squadron presently rushed forward again, and Conway dashed upon them at the



head of a company in which Hubbard and Burr were among the ranks. Conway stimulated the men by his own example. Hubbard was carried away by the *melée*. A species of intoxication seized him. The blood rushed to his head, and the landscape all around floated in a red mist.

The *Chevalier* Conway found himself at close quarters with the leader of the British troops, who shouted to him:

"You are the man I want, Conway. You are my prisoner!"

"Take me then, Simcoe," he called back, riding down his antagonist with a fierce sabre stroke.

The blow was met and parried, and Conway's sword shattered at the hilt.

"Yield or I'll thrust you through!" cried the victor fiercely.

Conway's hand sought the pistols in his holsters. He withdrew it reluctantly.

"You'll find better quarters with us, Conway. A search is out for you in the rebel camp," remarked his captor with a grim smile of triumph, amid the din and uproar around them.

"Speak plain English, Simcoe, not riddles," returned his prisoner doggedly.

"Later—but the Count de la Rourie would be glad to meet you."

"The Count de la Rourie, here?"—

"At your service, gentlemen," cried a voice beside

them as a roar of musketry enveloped the field with fresh din and smoke.

When it had cleared away the British dragoons had retired at a safe distance from the fresh reinforcement of the rebels, and their leader had not attempted to secure his prisoner. The Chevalier Conway fell back with the American troops, surveying Monsieur Bonvouloir, the French merchant, in his uniform of a colonel in the American service, as they retired up the eminence within the Continental lines.

"Ah, Monsieur," said Conway, "may I have the pleasure of congratulating—"

"Colonel Armand, at your service, Monsieur."

"I am your debtor a thousand times from this moment, Colonel Armand."

"Do not mention it, Chevalier. Are we not fighting for the same cause—human liberty, equality and fraternity!"

Both sides were content with the outcome of the day. The Americans bivouacked on Haerlem hills, satisfied with the safe passage of Colonel Knox's battalions from Bayard Hill, and night coming on, the British made camp above the Haerlem Plains, taking a breathing spell before completing the annihilation of the rebels that they contemplated on the morrow.



CHAPTER XXXIII.

WHEN COWS COME HOME AT MILKING TIME.

Hubbard, like Conway, had been surrounded by the British in their charge. When Colonel Armand swept down on them with his command, he was carried away to a distance by his captors in their panic. As the smoke and dust cleared he determined on an effort to escape from this enforced company. He sprang from his horse and threw himself on the ground in the brush, lying perfectly quiet, trusting that his presence had not been noted, or in the general confusion it would be overlooked.

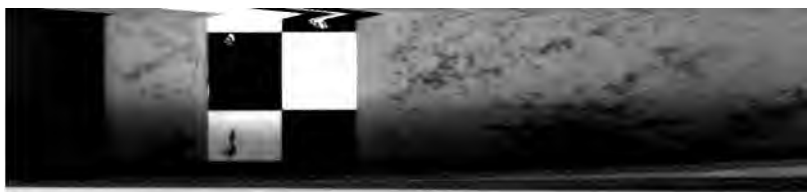
A rocky eminence rose back of him thickly covered with a scrubby underbrush at its foot, and a growth of pine and chestnut farther up the slope afforded a perfect screen. He crept cautiously up the ascent, pausing and watching frequently to see if he were detected. A squirrel scolded at him overhead and a bluejay shrieked and flittered in a neighboring tree. Several groups of British soldiers gathered below, and he heard Colonel Simcoe's voice rallying them. Soon they moved on, and, as the sounds became fainter he made his way over the top of the wooded ridge which fell away into a narrow secluded gorge on the other side.

A weakness and despondency heavily oppressed the Lieutenant. It seemed that he could not extricate himself from that web of mishap that clung about him. Not only his own affairs, but the country's service—its leaders, Washington himself, might be involved in circumstances that could have been averted by him. They had all grown out of his unlucky acquaintance with the Lady Claremont, and his secrecy concerning her. He could attribute it to nothing else, he groaned, as he pushed on, but he was through with her for good whatever might come, he assured himself fiercely.

A gnawing at the stomach and a yearning sense of emptiness reminded him that he had eaten nothing since breakfast that morning with Corporal Cotton. His illness had left him weak, and the reaction from the day's excitement was in a measure accountable for his present feeling. With a strong effort he put this aside, in a determination to make his way around to the west of the island where he would be likely to fall in with the American troops.

The afternoon was nearly spent and the light was becoming dim in the ravine, where the trees mingled their branches overhead, but there were still two hours of daylight before him. As he moved forward over the fallen limbs and branches, the gorge narrowed until it came to an end in a dark passage or cave that appeared to pass directly under and through a portion of the ridge.

Hubbard felt his way through this passage, which



WHEN COWS COME HOME AT MILKING TIME. 331

was short, and brightened soon with an opening beyond. The cavern issued from under an overhanging cliff into a small cove. The water of a pond extended from the cove, and over on a green hillside under the trees of the opposite shore not more than a few hundred yards distance, a herd of cows was grazing. Several women were busy milking. While he looked a flat-bottomed skiff put off from the shore and headed directly for the cove. An elderly colored man pulled at the oars. As Hubbard stepped back into the shadow of the cavern, he could see that there was a young woman in the boat, and that it carried several vessels of milk.

The voice of the woman floated out clear and pleasant over the water, as she gave an instruction and the boat glided directly into the cove, and upon the beach. As the man, an old negro servant, lifted the milk from the skiff Hubbard recognized him as one of the Murray coachmen. The young woman was Mistress Polly Murray. At the same moment he saw what he had failed to note in his first glance, that there was a row of shelves in the cool shade around the side of the cavern, holding earthen dishes for milk.

A movement on his part drew the attention of Miss Murray, who started, a slight flush spreading over her face as she saw and recognized him.

"I did not know that thou were here, Lieutenant Hubbard," she said, recovering herself as he came forward.

"I am trying to escape from the British," said he, and Miss Murray explained when he had told her of

his escape that in the absence of the farm hands in the day's confusion, she was directing the women from the house in the care of the cows that were pastured in the meadow by the lake.

The relief that Hubbard felt at this encounter was attended presently by a faintness that caused him to sit down to keep from falling.

"Thou art hungry," exclaimed the young woman with sympathy, "and we have bread in plenty."

She quickly set before him a dish of fresh milk, and a full loaf of the white Murray bread. When he had broken the loaf and partaken of it to his full satisfaction, the stomach and the strength of the Lieutenant were speedily restored to their normal state. He related the incidents that had brought him to the cave, and, having finished the meal she pointed out a low dip on the southern shore of the pond, through which he could most readily make his way to the Hudson River.

The day was drawing to a close as they entered the boat—Miss Murray accompanying him—and he poled it over the water to the point she had indicated. After a day of turmoil and violence the quiet of this secluded spot in the very heart of all the confusion, and untouched by it, was like another country, far removed. Only the lowing of the cows, and the pleasant voices of the women, were heard over the water. The last sun-rays gilded a pathway for the boat, and set the tree-tops on the hills around the lake

all aglow. Beyond, the dark surface of the pond was without a ripple, the skiff gliding noiselessly over it.

"Thou hast been ill and injured, we were told," Miss Murray spoke presently, her low voice breaking the quiet.

"Who told you that?" asked Hubbard, ceasing his task for a moment as he turned to her.

"Lady Claremont said that you had been wounded," she replied.

"And did she say how I came to be hurt?"

"She did not appear to know more."

"Do not trust the Lady Claremont," returned Hubbard bitterly, "I believe that she would aid the British against us."

"Oh, I do not think so," Miss Murray replied, and she related their experience that day, and the aid contributed by the Lady Claremont in detaining Sir William Howe and his officers.

"It is all very strange," said Hubbard with something like a sigh. "I cannot account for it."

"Did she not give the warning that thou brought to General Washington from Boston?" inquired Miss Murray with a woman's interest, and lowering her eyes under Hubbard's look.

"Who can say?" he replied, pushing the boat forward in silence.

The sun's red disc sank from sight behind the hills, leaving the purple mass above in a dull, ominous flame. From the water and the tree-tops the glow faded. The night birds cried, and swept low, and a chill September

night wind rustled through the trees with a sough, and the voice of coming storm.

"Goodbye, Miss Murray," said Lieutenant Hubbard despondently, as the boat ran upon the beach. He took her hand, and remembered long how soft and white and firm it was within his own. "We have bad weather before us, I fear."

"Goodbye," she replied without withdrawing her hand. "We shall hope often to hear well of thee, Lieutenant Hubbard, as the better days come."

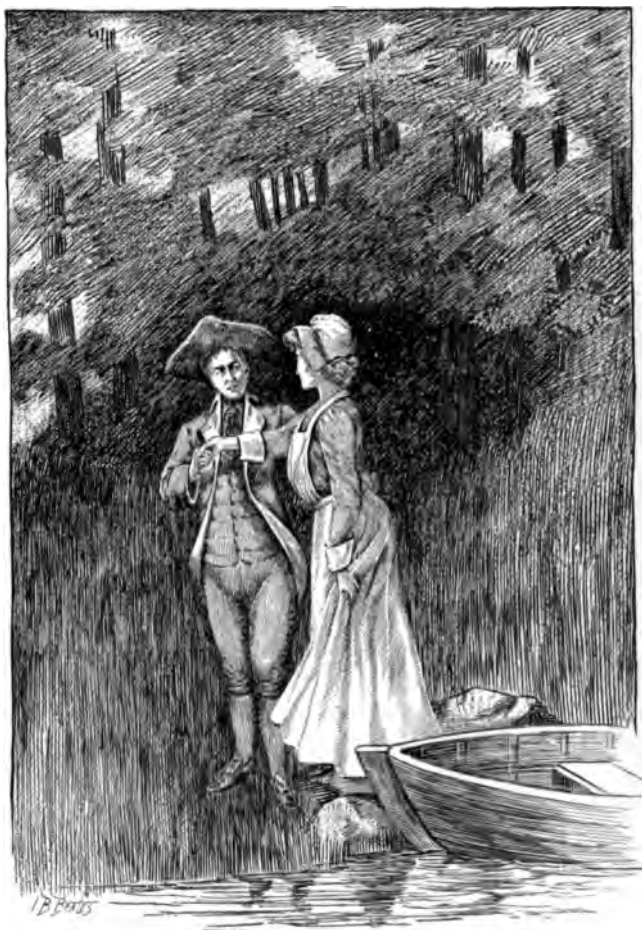
"And they will come," he returned, with a toss of his head in his natural manner.

"Surely as the sun just gone will rise to-morrow—if not then fair, it will be at a later day when we are a little older."

He pushed her boat away from the shore, and watched as her figure faded silently in the dusk, turning once to wave him another farewell. Then he made his way toward the river.

In the Hubbard family we have a portrait of our great-grandmother, Mistress Polly Murray Hubbard, as she appeared at twenty—a charming face, soft, but resolute eyes, and a sweet mouth. Lieutenant Hubbard came to know her better in after years, as those who know our family may remember.

At daylight next morning Colonel Knowlton and his Rangers executed a strategic movement on the British, that was unexpected. It resulted in the Battle of Haerlem Heights. That incident closes this portion of



“We shall hope often to hear well of thee, Lieutenant Hubbard.” *Page 334.*

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WHEN COWS COME HOME AT MILKING TIME. 335

General Hubbard's journal. His story of the battle is cut short by several missing and illegible pages, difficult to follow, but the admirable study of the battle by Professor Henry P. Johnston, of the College of the City of New York, supplies all that is missing, and will enable anyone to trace that important victory which was fought around Claremont, where General Grant's tomb stands to-day.

That good day's work, General Hubbard says, made up for Kip's Bay, though with the sad loss of two such brave soldiers as Knowlton and Leitch. It was an open fight in which the Yankee soldiers won with even numbers, and they took courage from that time.



EPILOGUE.

General Hubbard does not take up his journal again for several months. This interval is probably for the short time when he became a British prisoner in the city. Subsequently he rejoined the army, serving through the war with credit, personal bravery and distinction. He lived far into the last century happy with his wife and their children.

The Battle of Haerlem Heights, and more especially the retreat from Bayard Hill, brought Captain Alexander Hamilton to the notice of General Washington, who appointed him on his personal staff. Hamilton then entered upon that career which proved him one of the most brilliant men that the Revolution produced. His suit with Miss Schuyler prospered, and their correspondence resulted in their marriage two years later.

Major Burr retired from the army with a good record, and the rank of colonel, in 1779, to take up the study of law. His rapid rise to prominence as a lawyer and a public man after the war, is well known, and he came within a single vote of being elected the third president of the United States, over Thomas Jefferson. General Hubbard as a friend of both Burr and Hamilton, always insisted that Burr received scant credit for his services at Bayard Hill, where he



saved Knox's command, and the greater part of Silliman's Brigade, more than a thousand good soldiers, who could not well have been spared the American cause at that critical period; and their capture might have included the loss of Hamilton as well for the country.

Miss Moncrieffe was married the same year (1776) to Captain Coghlan, one of the officers of General Howe's staff, a young man of wealth and position. She figured prominently and attractively in the festivities of New York and Philadelphia under the British, returning to London with her husband when Sir William Howe was relieved. General Hubbard remarks that he never afterward knew Major Burr to make reference voluntarily to Miss Moncrieffe.

Chevalier Conway was advanced the following year in the American service, and in official circles, when his conspicuous part in the intrigues that led to the Conway Cabal brought his career to a sudden close in this country.

Colonel Simcoe served with equal credit and brilliancy in the British army to the end of the war.

Colonel Armand raised and equipped a regiment at his own expense, taking part in most of the important engagements of the war. A subsequent reference in the journal intimates that he afterward met Lady Claremont and an understanding, mutually satisfactory, was reached between them. He returned to France at the close of the war.

Lady Claremont remained in New York the follow-

ing year of Sir William Howe's occupation of the city. Not long after her return to England she was married to a distinguished peer and diplomat, by which union her interest in public affairs was afforded a wide scope during the agitated state of European politics at the close of the century. Her tact and influence are said to have directed in more than one instance the treaties and politics of that critical period.

Colonel Trumbull did not long survive the American evacuation of New York. He died the following year—one of those devoted and unselfish patriots whose deeds do not show on battle rolls. He contributed largely to the success of the cause for which he gave his life.

Corporal Timothy Cotton was associated with Lieutenant Hubbard through the war, and is frequently mentioned in the journal.

During the first years of Washington's administration as President, and while the seat of government was in New York, it is related by Mrs. Martha J. Lamb, the historian of the city, that the ten mile drive to the upper end of the island at Claremont, was the favorite and most frequent recreation taken by President Washington. Afterward this site, on which the tomb of General Grant now stands, was under consideration as one of the desirable locations for the national capital, before the present city of Washington was selected.

In 1812 a stone fort was built at what is now One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Street and Claremont.

It was named Fort Laight, and it overlooks the point where Leitch and Knowlton fell in the assault made by the Rangers at the Battle of Haerlem Heights and a vestige of it still remains. A few years ago a bronze tablet was set in the walls of Columbia University, where it overlooks the buckwheat field which was the centre of the fight.

General Hubbard lived to a good old age, but before his death the town of York had expanded to justify the expectations of Mr. William Walton, one of its most sagacious merchants. In the half century since the city of New York has continued to grow with unexhausted vitality and none may say when it will stop.

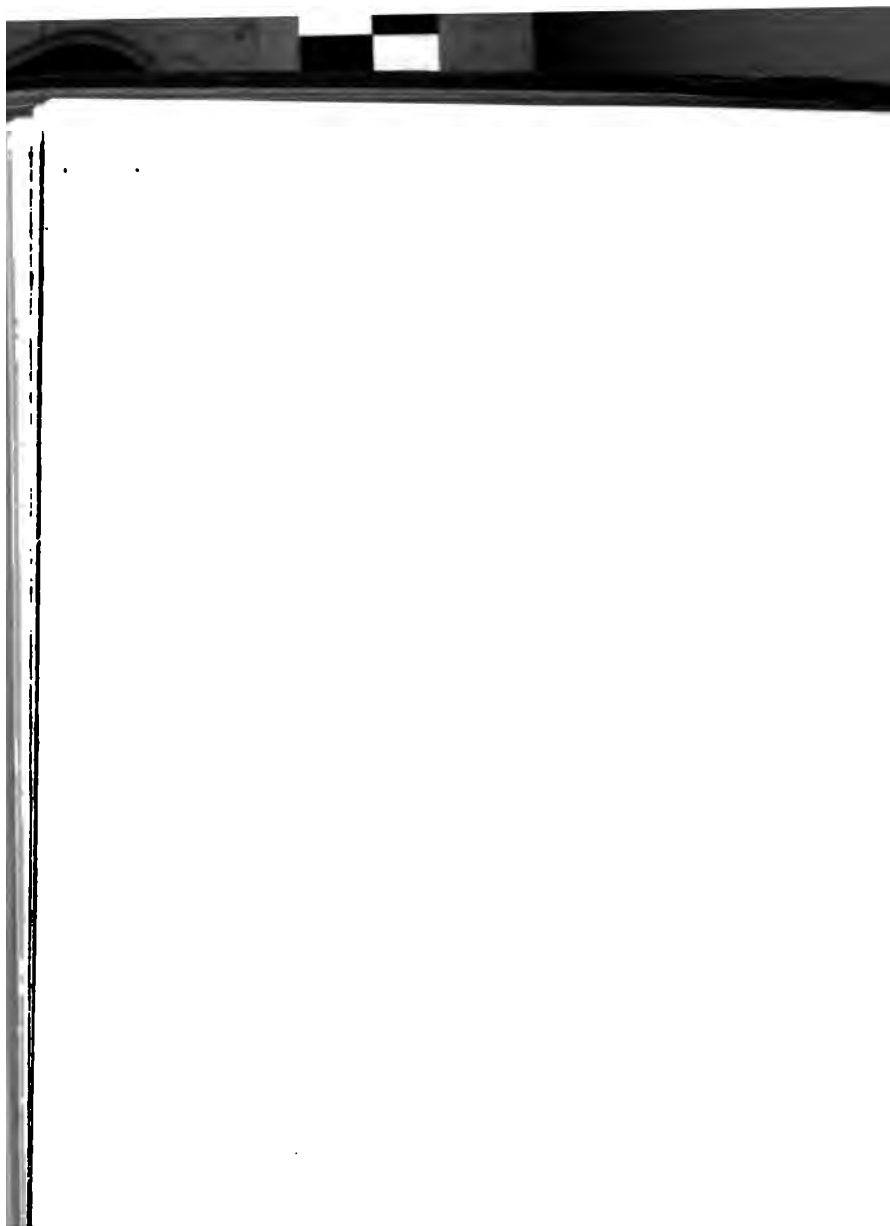
Some day it may be the shade of Dr. Benjamin Franklin will be permitted his wish to return for a brief hour to this Twentieth Century. Perhaps it will find shelter in the bronze which now stands for him in Printing House Square, listening all day to the chatter of the English sparrows who seek seclusion at dark in the ample frock tails of his coat. Here in full view are the City Hall and its town clock, which have changed little in a century. Directly in front was the Stone Jail where Hubbard the Express swung off from Bowery Lane, past the Brick Church into Nassau Street, as he entered town.

The great philosopher, some people now say, was not a gentleman. Perhaps his greeting would be less cordial to-day in his own country than it was in the Paris of his time. From this site he would catch

the full blare of the electric life. He would see the human torrent raging around him night and day;—rising into the air above and sinking into the earth beneath; whisked from sight by those potent forces he once evoked, and which are as invisible as his own shade. His pride of race might then be satisfied to take for granted the future, and content to return to the quiet and rest of the narrow house and the long sleep.

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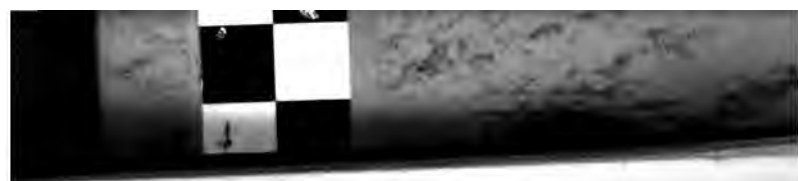
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